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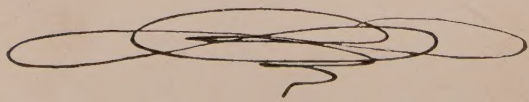








Veritas Domini manet  
in aeternum. P. 116  
M. J. H. Heilant.



# GOD'S WAYS ARE WONDERFUL

*or:*

HOW AND WHY I BECAME  
A CATHOLIC.

—  
“Blessed are the homesick;  
for they shall return home.”

—Heinrich Stilling

—  
A word of justification, first of all for my children,  
as well as for those who seek  
the truth,

by

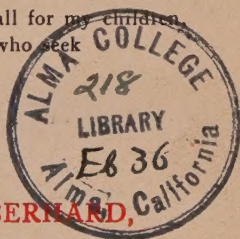
**MARTIN J. TH. EBERHARD,**

Formerly Lutheran Minister in America and Australia.

FOURTH EDITION

TRANSLATED FROM THE GERMAN.

4284



Entered according to Act of Congress in the year 1905,

*By*

MARTIN J. TH. EBERHARD,

St. Paul, Minn.

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St. Paul, Minn.  
Randall Printing Company  
1905

# SOME RECOMMENDATIONS OF ARCHBISHOPS AND BISHOPS FOR THE GERMAN EDITION OF THIS BOOK.

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St. Paul, August 6, 1898.

*Mr. Martin J. Th. Eberhard:*

Dear Sir: I am pleased to hear that you are preparing a third edition of your book, "Gottes Wege sind Wunderbar." The book deserves to have a wide circulation. It cannot fail to do much good. It sets forth very clearly and in an interesting style strong arguments for our holy faith, and these are made to possess further strength when presented, as they are, in connection with the recital of the sacrifices made by yourself through your submission to the teachings of this faith.

Very sincerely,

†JOHN IRELAND,

Archbishop of St. Paul.

---

St. Peter's Cathedral,

Cincinnati, O., June 28, 1900.

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.....  
\* \* \* \* \*

His book, giving an account, in German, of his conversion, has been highly commended by some Archbishops and Bishops, who have read it. They regard it as both interesting and instructive, particularly calculated to lead non-Catholics to the truth. He is preparing an English translation, and I recommend him to Priests and others who may be able to assist in circulating the book in either language.

†WILLIAM HENRY ELDER,

Archbishop Cincinnati.

Milwaukee, April 19, 1898.

My best thanks for your book. I read it with the greatest interest, and to my edification. I have no doubt that it will do much good and strengthen the Catholic cause. You may be sure of my hearty recommendation.

Very sincerely yours,

†FRED. X. KATZER,

Archbishop of Milwaukee.

---

La Crosse, Feb. 9, 1899.

We recommend from all our heart \* \* \* Mr. Eberhard and his excellent book, "God's Ways Are Wonderful, or How and Why I Became a Catholic."

†JACOBUS SCHWEBACH,

Bishop.



# Preface of the Translator.

---

ON his many travels the author of the well-known book "*Gottes Wege sind Wunderbar, oder: Wie und warum ich katholisch geworden bin*," was so frequently requested and advised by bishops, priests and laymen to publish an English version of his book that he has at last decided to comply with the request of his numerous friends and acquaintances among clergy and laity, and to this end has authorized and favored the writer of these lines with this work.

To give a good and correct translation is by no means an easy task. However, I have tried my best to render it in an easy and flowing style and to overcome the stiffness so frequently found in translations. How much or how little I have succeeded I leave to the kind reader to decide, but at the same time hope he may not be too severe in his criticism.

Since its first publication in 1897 up to the present time, twenty thousand copies of the German original have been sold, and it has undoubtedly done much good, as can be seen from the numerous letters to that effect received by the author. The hope that his work may also do much good among the English-speaking people of this country is the author's main object in publishing this translation.

That it may receive the same hearty welcome which was tendered the original is the sincere wish of

The Translator.

# Introduction of the Author.

---

**G**OD'S ways are wonderful. Innumerable Christians have experienced the truth of these words.

Through God's grace I also was permitted to have this experience. Wonderfully has the Lord led me during my whole life; wonderfully has He guided my footsteps over very complicated paths indeed; out of the confusion of Protestantism, back to the unity of our sweet, gracious mother, the Catholic Church. Therefore: May Jesus Christ be praised!

My object in writing this book is, *to praise God for mercy He has bestowed upon me*, giving me the grace to find the One True Church in a way so marvelous; and especially as a justification and explanation to *my own children*, about whose future welfare I was especially anxious, when, through God's grace, I became convinced of the truth of the Catholic religion, renounced the Lutheran sect, gave up my ministry in it, and therewith Protestantism. Moreover, I wish to comply with the request of a *competent personage* and narrate the story of my conversion *for the benefit of others*.

MARTIN J. TH. EBERHARD.

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# God's Ways Are Wonderful.

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## CHAPTER I.

### CHILDHOOD AND BOYHOOD.

I DESCEND from an old family of ministers in Mecklenburg-Schwerin, Germany, my father (also two of his brothers), my grandfather, and my great-grandfather all being so-called Lutheran ministers. I write "so-called," for my grandfather was a Rationalistic minister at Penzlin, a small town of Mecklenburg, for Rationalism also prevailed in Lutheran Mecklenburg in the beginning of the nineteenth century. My father, however, became a staunch Lutheran, and was deeply grieved that his son, the grandson of the good Rationalistic minister, following his profoundest conviction, should become a Catholic.

I was born March 7, 1854 (the year in which the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin was declared a dogma of the Church), at Laage in Mecklenburg-Schwerin, the eldest son of the Conrector Friedrich Eberhard\*, and was baptized by a devout Lutheran minister on April 2 of the same year. My father, however, soon became Rector of New-Buckow, another little country-town, where I spent my childhood.

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\* Died May 12, 1904, at the ripe old age of 86 years, at Schwerin, in Mecklenburg, R. I. P.

I had much freedom; the attendance of the first class of the Rector's School, however, did not have a good influence upon me morally, because I, at the age of seven, associated with the much older boys, who were very rough and some even immoral. The foundation of my later prejudice against the Catholic Church was laid here, since shuddering stories were related to us of the superstition of that church. We were told, for instance, that the Egyptian darkness was still shown at Doberan in a box as a relic (!). As a child I had religious impressions. Thus I remember the deep impression which the sweet chimes of the bells and the majestic strains of the organ in church made upon me. I was also fond of singing hymns at home, and I listened attentively to the long sermons in church. Two events in this period had a great influence upon my future, namely: the loss of my little sister, Marie, who was three years old at the time of her death; and the reception given to the Grand-duke in 1864, on which occasion I declaimed a poem, composed by my father, and was highly praised, although I thought I had not done well. I think that my first impulse to become a minister was caused by these two events. Indeed, in a different position I hardly would have had the opportunity to understand the errors of Lutheranism.

But when that same year my father became Rector of Suelstorf, about eight miles from Schwerin, the capital of Mecklenburg, my love for the ministry received fresh nourishment. At the age of eleven an event of the most serious consequence happened to me. It was the death of my beloved mother, which made a very deep, yes, I can say, the deepest impression upon my soul. I often visited the grave of my dear mother, where I wept and prayed, or pondered over

serious subjects. Especially whenever I felt lonesome and forsaken, I would wend my way to her dear grave, from which I usually returned with a happier and lighter heart. After the death of my dear mother, a cousin conducted the domestic affairs of my father for about a year. A devout Protestant from Prussia, she gained great influence over me, especially in my religious thoughts and sentiments. At this period I received the first deep religious impressions. I perceived that I needed a Saviour, and then especially the passage, "Come to me, all you that labour, and are burdened, and I will refresh you" (Matth. 11, 28.) gave me much consolation. On Sundays, when other children played, I would read the Passion of our Lord with great interest. Often would I go to some secluded spot and pray. I also particularly enjoyed visiting and consoling the sick of our village. With pleasure I spoke of religious things or listened to such conversations. Thus, for example, I remember a conversation in which my cousin asserted, that there was an intermediate place after death; but I denied this, basing my statement on the catechism I had learned. But who was to decide here? Both of us of course insisted upon our individual opinions, according to our own explanation of Holy Scripture. "This is indeed Protestant—contrary to II. St. Peter 1, 20: "Understanding this first, that no prophecy of scripture is made *by private interpretation.*" The first winter in Suelstorf I attended the village school, besides receiving private instructions from my father in Latin and French. The religious instructions in the village school were devoutly Lutheran, once even too Lutheran for the minister, my father, and he therefore forbade the teacher to let us study the questions by heart concerning exorcism, "because in this case the set formulary of baptism con-

tradicts the catechism of our country,"—exorcism being omitted in the formulary. This seemed rather strange to me even at so tender an age. But that the history of the *birth of Luther* was related so that a person could almost take it for the history of the *birth of Christ, did not seem so strange*. No wonder. For *Luther is indeed the true Savior of Protestantism*, who first had to come, in order to "improve" and remedy the church founded by Christ on eternal truth!

After my father had taken his second wife, a sister of my deceased mother—Protestantism still permits this in Mecklenburg—my cousin left us. At her departure she gave me a copy of the New Testament as a remembrance, which I have kept to this day. *More* she could not give, for she was a Protestant. But I believe she roused the first impulse in me to seek the Truth, for she often exhorted me to pray *kneeling*, altogether against the practice of the Protestants, who usually pray *sitting*. With tears in our eyes did we children see her depart. Since that time I no longer felt happy under the parental roof, was left much to myself and passed my time with other boys, wept over my sins, but improved little. I longed for a mother's love. I often went to the grave of my mother; but I was not permitted to pray for the repose of her soul. For in Protestantism works for the dead are indeed at an end with their death and burial, since they, according to Protestant doctrine, usually all "immediately enter heaven," merely in consequence of their death, at least in Mecklenburg, where (to this day, if I am not mistaken) every Mecklenburger is canonized at his burial by the established "church" of Mecklenburg with the words of the burial formula: "In firm and certain expectation of the resurrection to life everlasting." This struck me, even as a boy. The Protest-

ants have no place of purification. Faith *alone* gives them immediate salvation—since Christ's justice "covers" all injustice—though they themselves may have remained the greatest sinners. How they can nevertheless attain eternal happiness in the presence of the thrice holy God, since nothing impure can enter heaven, although they are only *pronounced just*, not *made just*, is incomprehensible, yes, entirely absurd. The doctrine of justification through faith *alone*, however, belongs to the mock "pearls" of which Protestantism boasts, which, because thoroughly false, has only caused contradiction in its own system, whilst in reality such pearls are mere husks and good for swine, since, according to such a doctrine, man can consequently live like a beast. This thought often struck my mind as a boy, and even at that time it seemed to me that such a doctrine stood in contradiction with the requirements of morality.



## CHAPTER II.

### AT COLLEGE.

WHEN I look back upon the five years of college life, which I spent in Schwerin, the capital of Mecklenburg, I would like to call out again and again with the Psalmist: "The sins of my youth, and my ignorance, do not remember. According to thy mercy remember thou me." I was a young, inexperienced boy, entirely left to myself; now every one, who understands anything about education, can easily imagine the result. Just in the dangerous years of youth, when the boy and young man is in every respect in such great need of guidance and support, education in Germany is often left to chance. A proof of Protestant wisdom as to education!

Think of a boy of thirteen years, accessible to everything evil as well as good, not yet strengthened in Christian principles, who, without the support of a Christian family-life, lives independently in a rented room, either alone or with one of his equals—what consequences that usually has! Also an example how Protestantism leads early in life to independence and dissoluteness! Entirely different on the other hand is the method of education in the Catholic Church, which, taking the boy under paternal, ecclesiastical protection, admonishes him to lead a Christian life in communities according to a fixed order; and this with such success, that the method of community-life is adopted for the purpose of education by some sects here in America, for instance by the Lutherans.

But at that time I was not yet in America, but in good Lutheran Mecklenburg, at the renowned Gymnasium Fridericianum at Schwerin, which, like so many other institutions, had its origin in a Convent School, the old dome-school, at the time of the so-called Reformation. I was admitted to the "Sexta." My professor, Dr. L—, was a good, kind-hearted man, who had won my heart at the first moment when, smilingly coming towards me, he shook hands with me. I had gone from home with the best of resolutions; but when I tried to keep them—for instance, to read a short meditation and prayer in the evening—I soon found obstacles in my way. As I had to share my room with an older student, a great number of boys and young men often came in the evening when we should have studied—and nothing came of studies and prayer. Often in the morning the bell of the *Catholic church*, not far from where I roomed, reminded me of prayer. Ah, had I but minded it better, had I only been attracted by it then! But, alas, only with contempt was this church always spoken of! I, on the other hand,—especially when out for a walk—was occupied with religious thoughts. Once during this time—well I remember it—I had a conversation about the doctrine of the Blessed Eucharist with my much older and rather unbelieving room-mate, in which I defended the true presence of Christ. The Protestant divine service at Schwerin in what was once a *Catholic* cathedral—never had I been in such a beautiful church before—with the powerful strains of the organ and the earnest exhortations of "Superintendent" Karsten, often moved me to tears. Other impressions, however, usually blotted out the good ones. Whenever my room-mate—also the son of a Lutheran minister—and I read novels to each other into the night, or

when we both went to the theatre, or to the art gallery (with some really immoral pictures), the good impressions were soon obliterated again. Still I always went to church regularly and with pleasure, though I was often ridiculed on that account by my fellow-students; yes, in this period I even dared to enter the *Catholic* church once or twice, whose divine service with the bright light of the wax-candles and the sweet perfume of incense especially attracted me. I can even now remember very well a sermon on St. Luke 14, "the parable of the supper," although I was then only thirteen years of age. Most of my relatives in Schwerin did not care for the little boy otherwise than that they gave him—according to the custom there—a meal once a week, and at the most, as it happened once, gave him a ticket for the theatre, which they could not use themselves—indeed a fine present for a boy of *that* age! After the first half-year I received a good testimonial and was promoted to the "Quinta," although according to my opinion I did not deserve it.

To leave good Dr. Latendorf was very hard for me, for, from the beginning, he had made such a good impression upon me. Once when he explained the passage: "Jesus Christ, yesterday, and to-day; and the same for ever" (Heb. 13, 8) I was moved to tears during class; I also liked him especially since he was about the only one of my professors whom I *saw in church* occasionally. Ah, if the dear old man—unfortunately still blinded so much by Lutheranism!—(I saw him again in Germany in 1892)—would only think over the just quoted Scriptural text thoroughly! Would he not perhaps come to the knowledge that in Protestantism Jesus Christ is *to-day* a different person from *yesterday*, and *to-morrow* a dif-

ferent person from to-day, whilst He is *the same for ever* only in His holy Catholic Church, where He Himself is always present in the Blessed Sacrament, until the end of time! It is true, Lutheranism teaches—to my knowledge also in Mecklenburg—that Christ is present “in, with, and under” the bread and wine *for those* receiving communion, although the Catholic dogma of Transubstantiation is, of course, denied *by the ministers themselves*; but you, nevertheless, find many laymen with Catholic ideas. In practice, however, they often do not seem to believe in this presence very much. When, for instance, most of the “pastors”—they are not permitted to administer communion to *themselves*, since that would look too Catholic—receive communion with their families from a neighboring minister *but once a year*; or, when the “custom” of the college in Schwerin demanded, that professors—*believing* and *unbelieving*, also deists and materialists—receive the Lutheran communion with the students *once a year*—then the faith in the *real* presence of Christ seems to be resting on a rather weak foundation in Mecklenburg.

My new professor was a good-natured man; but he never went to church. He loved the German language above all else, and whilst the pious Lutherans were in church, he would work at his dictionary. Personally he was fond of me. I owe him special thanks for making us use our memory, since it was a peculiarity of his to make us study his Latin Grammar *verbatim*. This training of the memory was a great advantage to me afterwards as preacher. But—perhaps because he liked me so much (?)—I with a few others remained in this class a year and a half. The classes were too large at that time, so that laziness could easily be indulged. Whenever I was at home dur-

ing vacation, I always had an opportunity to observe the Protestant divine service out in the country. The parish-church, which in reality was too small for the congregation, was seldom filled, excepting on great holydays; in summer especially the emptiness was striking, so that it often reminded one of the "voice of one crying"—St. John the Baptist—"in the *wilderness*." The parish-church itself, as well as the mission-church, although the former was by no means without money, at that time did not have, nor has it even to this day, either baptismal font or organ. I have, however, seen a wooden font in the parish-church, which nevertheless was set aside as rubbish, as it was not necessary, since baptism was no longer performed in church, but only in the parsonage, as if baptism were no ecclesiastical function any more, although marriages were performed in church before the altar, with rural splendor—sometimes even, to the disgust of the minister, with whiskey-bottles in the pockets. The organ *was substituted by the voice of the sexton*—especially in summer—who then would sing the few responses. The "mission," however, taken all in all, made a more favorable impression. Already the old altar, still a remnant of old Catholic times, with its twelve gilt statues of the Apostles (which to this day look as if they had just been gilded) had a more ecclesiastical appearance. Not far from the pulpit there was also a beautiful group of the Crucifixion, with the Blessed Virgin and St. John at the foot of the cross, nearly in life size. I know that this picture, which originated in Catholic times, always made a deep impression upon my soul. But then there was also to be seen in this church a *curiosity*: a pew for penitents, with the inscription: "O God, be merciful to me, a sinner," and behind the altar—not without *shuddering*, one would

look at it—was a long, old cloak for penitents, which had turned gray with age, and which, so they said shuddering, the penitents had to wear in front of the church-door in old Catholic times. Thereby they rejoiced over the enlightenment of Protestantism, which makes such great advances to the freedom of the old Adam. In practice the realization of this fact can plainly enough be seen in dear, old Mecklenburg. For it is known almost the world over that for the modern heathenism there the sixth commandment has almost entirely ceased to exist—according to the melody: “Ein freies Leben fuehren wir, etc.” (A free life do we lead, etc.).

Ah, Mecklenburg, thou blessed land, thou my beloved fatherland, when will the day come that thou, freed from the tyranny of the “omnipotent” State, wilt again return to thy right mother, the True Church? When will the time come that the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass will again be celebrated in thy churches? (Most of these were built by Catholics in olden times!) Unfortunately the darkness of prejudice and of hatred against the Catholic Church still prevails! Even in our “days of enlightenment and intelligence” free exercise of religion is still a chimera in Mecklenburg! Hardly, four Catholic congregations are tolerated. Where then does the much-spoken-of Protestant tolerance remain?\*

The church in Kraack, the mission of my father, was afterwards provided with beautiful Gothic windows, so that now, even from the outside, it looks still more like a Catholic Church. But when will its doors again be opened to the sublime service of the Catholic Church, when will the unbloody Sacri-

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\* The laws of Mecklenburg regarding the Catholic Church were somewhat modified in February 1903, and although the Church has thereby gained a point, still she is as yet at the mercy of the stringent laws. I may therefore repeat the words of the author: “Where does the much-spoken-of tolerance remain?”

fice of the Mass again be celebrated within its venerable walls? Perhaps in not too distant time! Already dawns the day of a new Catholic era for the northerly neighboring islands. So also for thee, dear Mecklenburg, it will soon dawn, and the "Star of the Sea," "*Stella maris*" will rise for you, filling you with hope! Mecklenburg was originally a Catholic country, and, like so many others, was *violently* snatched from the bosom of the Mother Church. When the unendurable, miserable ecclesiastical conditions there shall once have become intolerable to all sincere souls, then the original Catholic conscience of the people—which, for example, has been preserved in the Low German expression "Prester" (priest) for minister, as also in the wish "God bless you!"—will be roused again, and Mecklenburg will be freed from the bureaucracy and will return to the freedom of the One True Church! The Lutherans already try to imitate the True Church in many things, but then they always meet with difficulties; e. g., in regard to their deaconesses. Thus I remember that the teacher from Hoort came to my father one day, arm in arm with a young girl who had been in the "convent" for a considerable time, in order to be married by him. She had merely changed her mind, but I suppose with more right than Luther's Kate. I cannot write "just in time," for Luther's "Church" is proud of the fact that it binds its deaconesses *by no vows whatsoever*, although the prevailing custom seems to stand in contradiction to this that on the day of their "consecration to God" a myrtle wreath generally adorns the table at the festive dinner.

Religious instruction at college was rather superficial. In the "*Tertia*," however, we had two good professors of Christian Doctrine, namely: Dr. Arthur

Hager, who a few years later became a convert to the Catholic Church, and Cand. Theol. Rummel. The former, perhaps unknown to himself, exercised a quiet influence upon me. He explained to us the Our Father, the two Epistles of St. Peter, etc. In the passage I. St. Peter 5, 13, he interpreted "Babylon," in opposition to most of the Protestant scholars of Exegesis, as "Rome." Otherwise I could not discover anything "Roman" about him. The other professor of Religion, however, who repeatedly read the Acts of the Apostles with us and gave the necessary explanations, diligently called our attention to the difference between Protestantism and Catholicism, so that this helped me considerably in acquiring a knowledge of the Catholic doctrine. Among others *he* explained the passage of St. Matth. 28: "Go ye therefore and teach all nations, etc," as spoken to *all* Christians without exception, which seemed very strange to me. The Catholic doctrine of Penance he correctly defined as *contritio cordis, confessio oris, satisfactio operis*. He also instructed us diligently in the free delivery of speeches, since he, who unfortunately could not deliver a sermon freely, from his own sad experience knew the dryness of a read sermon. During this time I lived with a quiet, orderly, and somewhat younger classmate of mine, and so we prayed together for a short time every evening. At that time I had made the acquaintance of a *Catholic* student, which, however, was only of short duration, but during that time I did not neglect to ask him about divers things concerning the Catholic Church. His account of the daily Examination of Conscience especially made an impression upon me. But other impressions blotted out the preceding ones.

I always felt so lonely; I was in want of a true friend. In the meantime—without a confessor, who has no place in Protestantism—being left to myself, I certainly found so-called friends enough, whose influence, however, had no good effect upon me. When at sixteen years I attended the instruction for the so-called Confirmation, I first began to look after the welfare of my soul again, although one cannot speak of real care for souls in Protestantism. During this time, especially in my seventeenth year, I listened to good, i. e., elaborate and eloquent sermons with pleasure. Besides I also went to the theatre. The impressions which I received here were generally not good ones, with but few exceptions, as for instance a passage in Goethe's *Egmont*: "Nach hause? Weisst Du, wo meine Heimat ist? (Homeward, Dost thou know where my home is?)" Ah, I also felt almost homeless, for at home I found very little love—I thought of the eternal home then—; but I did not yet know of the earthly, spiritual home of the Catholic Church! Thus I lived on in mourning over my sins—. And whenever I heard the celebrated preacher Bard preach in the (once Catholic) cathedral, e. g., a sermon on St. Luke 15: "Jesus receiveth sinners," it moved me so much that I felt a true love for the speaker and a sincere longing to *confess* my sins to him; only the unusualness and strangeness of such an action always prevented me again from doing so.

During this time the social intercourse at the house of my uncle Theodore had a good influence upon me, for I was treated with so much kindness and affection. Especially his daughter Theresa had often been to me an inspiration for good. Then I certainly did not know how, later on, the affection for St. Theresa of Jesus and her writings were to become a motive for

me to seek the Truth of the Catholic Church. Yes, God's ways are wonderful! Thus before I left Germany He also led me once more into a Catholic Church. A storm was approaching. I sought shelter in the church. Although I did not then understand the significance of the service just being held—Vespers with Benediction—the solemnity nevertheless made a deep, lasting impression upon me; and even now I usually am very deeply moved at the Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament. Outside it had nearly become dark. The lightning flashed; the thunder roared. But inside, in the little church, sweet voices sang the “O Salutaris,” and the burning candles on the sacred altar shone brightly like tiny stars through the rising fumes of incense. The priest gave the Benediction with the Blessed Sacrament. Every one bowed in deep adoration. But I *stood*,—stood in the rear of the church *alone*;—still representing the picture of a real Protestant—and I was seized with a longing, a longing I knew not for what,—so that I left the church in tears. It was perhaps the sensation of the silent presence of Him, who promised His Church: “Behold, I am with you all days, even to the consummation of the world!” It was surely the voice of the Good Shepherd: “As one whom the mother caresseth, so will I comfort you!” But I felt still more lonely, and thought of death and eternity.

I generally attended church at the dome, where I liked it best. Whether this was, so to say, “Catholic instinct” with me, I do not know. At all events, even the venerableness of this edifice, erected in the twelfth century, made an impression upon me—the corner-stone of this magnificent temple was laid under Bishop Beruo, Apostle of the Wends, on Sept. 5, 1171; during the time of the “Reformation” however, it was

robbed from the Catholic Church, like thousands of other churches, for the so-called Reformation was introduced everywhere with more or less *violence*. But only with the violent aid of the State could the "blessed Reformation" gain a footing; and only with the aid of the State can it be maintained. For should the State withdraw its protection, or if this "Church" were placed upon its own foundation, it must, because built upon sand, soon collapse. This can be seen in foreign countries, where it is without the aid of the State. For this reason it belongs to the impossibilities of Lutheranism to erect such magnificent temples, as the faith of our fathers has done; and its sectarian character plainly shows itself in this country, among others also in the many *small* houses of prayer, whereas the largest and most beautiful churches here in America, as well as in foreign countries, belong to the Catholic Church—a fact, which alone ought to suffice, to give Protestants a few points for reflection. Sometimes I also attended services at the castle-church, and heard a sermon preached by my professor, Dr. Hager, who later on became a convert. Here the kneeling-benches struck me; however they were no longer used for kneeling, but only for foot-stools. It is indeed much more "comfortable" to pray sitting. Protestantism is the "comfortable religion," and one really need not wonder that people extend their "home comfort" also to their church-pews. As a young boy I could hardly imagine it differently. If one came into church, he would usually drop into his seat at once (only a few preferred to stand a moment) and if it went well would pray an Our Father, in the meantime holding his hat before his face. Therefore it was something of an *ecclesiastical curiosity* to me, when

once in a year the congregation prayed *kneeling* during one prayer at the so-called confirmation.

Once a year I generally went to the "Lord's Supper." A so-called confession, at least in the Lutheran "Church," precedes this. A Catholic will hardly be able to form an idea of *this* "confession." For, although it is strictly prohibited by the Confession of Augsburg to drop confession ("*privatam absolutionem*")—the minister and his congregation have dropped it long ago, for it is so much "easier." What still remains of the divine institution of Catholic confession in the Lutheran "Church" are hardly ruins, which have a different appearance in different countries and congregations. In the established Church of Mecklenburg, although the old ritual of Mecklenburg expressly requires the so-called private confession as the only one authorized, "confession" nevertheless has taken the following appearance in the course of time: The minister admonishes those present to go to confession; thereupon one of those present makes a common confession of sins in general—says therefore what every one already knows beforehand, that he and all men are sinners. Then the people are asked by the minister to give their consent by answering with "yes," which they comply with—if they are not too lazy to answer, or have no objections otherwise—and without an exception are vigorously "absolved" by the minister, by imposition of hands. In this manner I also went to "confession." I must say I meant it seriously. But it never pleased me that I was not allowed to make my confession *myself*. But in Suelstorf, whenever I went to "communion" there with my parents, they met my want, since I was generally requested to recite the "confession." But since it became too monotonous for me to repeat over and over again the formula,

as found in the catechism, I used my own words. This practice, however, could have enticed me to become proud: after I had "confessed" in this manner, a woman of the village came to us a few days later, and asked me "uem de schoene Bicht" (for the beautiful confession); however I could not comply with her wish. From this one can see that, whilst Catholic confession is an act of the greatest humiliation and self-denial for man, the Lutheran "confession" rather *flatters* pride. Very sectarian-like indeed, for pride is the innermost nature of sectarianism, so that quite many are willing—think of the Methodists—to appear *publicly*, and to speak of their great sinfulness, only in order to be able to praise the more their present conversion and sanctity. And yet the same people will not even confess privately to a priest *sub sigillo*, because thus a person would not get renowned. This I have sufficiently experienced later on as minister. But what urged me to become a minister? I hardly believe that I ever would have become a Catholic, had I taken the ordinary course, in order to follow my vocation in Germany. For the sectional differences do not *appear* so vividly in the ecclesiastical conditions of Mecklenburg, as among the Lutherans in FOREIGN countries. For this reason perhaps God permitted that I was led by circumstances to carry out in a *foreign* country my intention of becoming a minister. Since the entire college-course was completely changed, and much more was required of the students, I was in consequence of these new circumstances not promoted. One of my professors, whom all feared, but no one loved, always preceded me into the next class, so that I would always have had him as professor again; I therefore had very little desire to remain any longer at this college, and so my father intended to send me to the college at Ros-

tock. But when during the Easter vacation of 1872 I happened to see an appeal in the "Gotteskasten" of Mecklenburg to young men who intended to become ministers in the diaspora, I was filled with so much enthusiasm and love for this vocation that, having made closer inquiries, I instantly determined to become a minister in the United States of America. But first I had to attend the Teachers' Seminary at L. for almost a year with the other young men concerned, partly in order to perfect my knowledge of the Classics, by taking private lessons, partly in order to study pedagogical science, and then prepared in this manner, to prove myself qualified for the study of Theology. In later years, when I had to support my family by teaching school, this one year at L. was of good service to me.



## CHAPTER III.

### AT THE TEACHERS' SEMINARY.

THE life at the Teachers' Seminary I enjoyed much more than at college; simply because it was based on a Christian foundation, with morning and evening prayers in common. The instruction was thorough, but as to Religion it was strictly Lutheran. I was particularly impressed by the practical explanation of Bible History by Prof. H., who gave me private lessons in Latin, Greek and French. Once he had given us as written task, a composition on the anointing of Christ by Mary Magdalen, which narrative causes Lutheran Exegesis many difficulties in the passage; "Many sins are forgiven her, because she hath *loved much.*' (Luke 7, 47). I had simply shown that one could see from this passage, how *that* faith only justifies, which is *active through love*. Then afterwards, certainly not without reason, I put the innocent question to him, how this agreed with the Lutheran doctrine of justification by faith *alone*, where it is said, that only the *fides formata* justifies. In this doctrine there would then be very little or no difference between the Lutheran and Catholic faith. With this remark I visibly perplexed him; for he would either have to acknowledge an approach of the modern Lutherans to the Catholic Church in regard to this doctrine, or a deviation of modern Lutheranism from the original doctrine of Luther. The explanation of the catechism by Professor O. H., was

also interesting. He did not fail as often as an opportunity offered itself, to clearly show the contrast "to Rome," and warned us, among other things, against looking upon the Lutheran dogmatical writings as "paper pope"—as if this were possible at all! It is true the *Missourians* here in America have tried it, but not for any length of time, as they could not maintain the unity in doctrine by means of this "paper pope;" simply because a "paper pope" is a nonentity, and the dogmatical writings of the Lutherans would nevertheless need an authorized, personal interpreter, if thereby unanimity were to be maintained among them.—Speaking of the "ecclesiastical life" at the Teachers' Seminary, I must first remark that in the strict sense of the word it does not exist among Lutherans. For the entire so-called ecclesiastical life is confined to the celebration of Sunday and some few holydays. During the week the Protestant churches are closed, and only on the holydays do they open their portals. The people then go to church, not so much to pray, as to hear Rev. N. N. or X. X. preach, according as one pleases. The churches are bare and empty. There is no tabernacle with the Blessed Sacrament to be seen; the altar, robbed of its finest ornaments, stands bare as if mourning, and the pulpit occupies the first place in church. It therefore entirely corresponds with the Protestant spirit if, as is often the case, the pulpit is placed high above the altar, which is thus degraded and used as a foot-stool. This was the case in the Lutheran church at L.,—the altar and the pulpit being on the side of the building. The divine service in this church, therefore, was in perfect conformity with the monotonous outer appearance. The singing—(of Liturgy there was very little existing)—consisted of whole notes as it seemed to me,

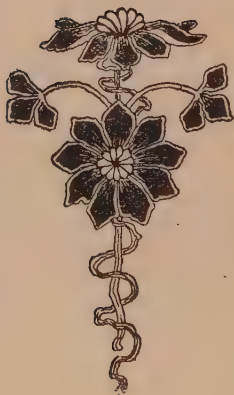
so that a person could hardly draw breath. The whole sermon was dry and long. Going to communion it once happened to me, being absorbed in prayer and not paying attention to the others that, whilst all others had remained standing, I knelt down before the altar, according to the custom of the congregation in *my* home. Four times a year the seminarians received communion with the director and the professors. As I have already mentioned, the college at Schwerin received only once. The so-called confession preceded communion. It was customary for the director to recite the formula—"in the name of all those confessing," whilst all present *stood*, according to real Protestant fashion. This "confession was an altogether general confession—no one of course thought of confessing individual sins—and only that was confessed which every one knew before. But I thought, why should I let myself be "*placed under a guardian*," and why was not every one permitted to make his confession *himself*?—I was always very glad when Sunday evening came, for then a special service was held in the oratory of the seminary, during which the director preached passionate, earnest and interesting sermons.

My intercourse with the seminarians was of very little advantage to me, since most of them, being older than myself, spoke much of their love affairs and of marrying. It was seldom that they had more serious conversations. And if one would speak of religious things, it often happened, as I have experienced, that one met with plainly uttered *unbelief*. On that account I was glad if I could be alone, and often took solitary walks. My inner life was associated with many struggles. The grave fir-trees of the neighboring woods were witnesses of many a prayer and

of many a tear which I offered up to God, and on one of the trees I carved the sign of the cross. The struggles within me were so violent that very often I would have recourse to the means of *fasting*, and then I would gain the victory. Oh, if only I could have had a confessor, who would have guided me, advising and consoling! But in Protestantism every one must rely upon himself, and things like fasting, etc., are looked upon as unnecessary, whilst they who practice it now and then are looked upon as eccentric.

Vacation I spent in Suelstorf at the parental home. Once I was there on a "day of prayer," which happened to fall on March 7, my birthday. According to God's decree it became the dying day of my little step-sister. Her death, just on my birthday, caused serious thoughts, and still more urged me on to prayer.—In vacation—it was shortly before my departure for America—I discovered the "180 Gruende, die mich bewogen haben, in den Schooss der roemisch-Katholischen Kirche zurueckzukehren, von Dr. Arthur Hager" ("180 reasons, which persuaded me to return to the Roman Catholic Church, by Dr. Arthur Hager"), a book, which excited my greatest interest, the more so, because it was written by my former professor at the college in Schwerin.—I could not, of course, agree with him in everything at that time, with my prejudice against the Catholic Church; but I know I agreed with him in many points, *privately*. It seemed to me rather *arrogant* that a minister's wife of the neighborhood said, after hearing Hager's utterances about the Lutheran communion criticised that *she* could refute *him*! And yet—*refuted he is not until this day*, because he and every one, who has found the Truth of the Catholic Church, *cannot* be refuted. Truly it is much easier in such cases to do like Bard,

the present president of the high-consistory at Schwerin, simply to write as marginal comment: "Doeskopp"—"Doeskopp" ("Blockhead"—"Blockhead"). By this however nothing is effected, and Protestantism thereby only gives another proof of its *poverty*.



## CHAPTER IV.

### ON THE WAY TO NORTH AMERICA.

NOW the time had come that I should take leave of everything dear to my heart, and to leave home, in order to continue studies in America, preparatory to becoming a Lutheran minister. Although it was hard for me to bid farewell, I departed (Sept. 15, 1873) with enthusiasm and devotion for my future vocation, yet without the presentiment that soon this enthusiasm for Lutheranism would be cooled off, as it were with gushes of cold water. At this time I had not perceived that the Protestant ministers are in truth only grave-diggers of their own doctrine, since what the one erects the other soon again tears down. On my voyage I was in a position to learn this, for here, whilst I was on my way to America, the dissensions of Protestantism, especially of the Lutheran "church," instantly appeared to me in various forms.

Before we put to sea, I lodged at Hamburg with another Lutheran Mecklenburger, who was originally an agriculturalist. He was going to America as adventurer but when he showed his colors, he soon proved to be more Protestant than Luther himself with his "Pecca fortiter, sed fortius fide et gaude in Christo" (i. e. sin courageously, but have stronger faith and rejoice in Christ), since by *his* private interpretation of Holy Scripture he had come to the knowledge—of the devil—that fornication was no sin! On the ship I met several others of this kind.

Among these was a young man, who adhered to Vogt's theory of evolution, and tried to persuade a young lady, an actress, to accept his views. The latter, however, although she herself did not believe in the Bible, was too sensible to believe in such nonsense, and simply said that it seemed much more sensible to her to believe what the Bible teaches about the creation of man by God, than to assent to such nonsense. I took the part of the actress, and turning to the "monkey-man" said contemptuously: "Sir, I congratulate you upon your nice parentage"—whereupon he went away abashed. Such people were, like so many other Protestants, separated from all authority by their private views, and driven into pure and simple unbelief; however, they manifested in the questions they sometimes touched upon a real abyss of inner misery and unappeased deep grief, for unbelief does not make anyone happy. But what was especially striking to me was this: that the majority of these poor infidels were, as it seemed, only driven into unbelief by their *Protestantism*, since they had, theoretically and practically, drawn the last conclusions themselves. The great ruptures and the remarkable divisions of Protestantism into hundreds of sects (especially observable in America) was used by many as an objection to *every* religion. Someone asked me once, how I could decide, which one of the sects was the True Church, and if I could prove that it was the Lutheran "Church." This question would not have perplexed me, had I then known the One True, Catholic, Apostolic Church; but it caused me to study this subject, and then to come to the conclusion at last that that infidel was quite right when he said that there could exist but one true church, which he, of course, had not found any more than I, at that time. "*Extra ecclesiam*

*non salus est*" remains true forever. Therefore, if the sincere Protestants reason logically, they must either become Catholics or infidels.

But that the Catholic Church is the target, at which many aim their hatred, could be distinctly noticed on board of our ship. The "Culturkampf" had just begun in Germany. Unconcealed was the joy, which most of the Protestants showed, whenever they heard of casual defeats of the "papists." Some even were delighted at the imprisonment of the faithful Catholic bishops, and thought that now it would not be long, until the new National Church of Germany—an Everybody's Church—would be erected upon the ruins of "Rome." As concerns myself, however, the calumniation of the Pope and bishops hurt my feelings, although I was a Lutheran, and I noticed and felt assured, that these people only hated the *truth*. On the other hand, the "Culturkampf" roused in me feelings of sympathy with the Catholic Church, which I dared not show. I asked myself, whenever I read how the ministers of Lutheranism, etc., made *one* obedient bow *after the other* to the omnipotence of the State, and how on the other hand the bishops, priests and people of the Catholic Church bravely held together like one man, and rather suffer fines and imprisonment on account of their faith, than to deny the truth—I asked myself, why then the Protestant "Church," especially the "Church of the true Gospel and Sacrament" did not make a move for defense. This fact made the most discouraging impression upon me, even at that time, and I thought: "That is enough to make a person become a Catholic!"

Ah, if only at that time I had had enough courage and deliberation to become a Catholic *in reality*! How much misery and how many struggles would have

been spared me, who was now thrown into the confusion and turmoil of Protestant Babel.

That Protestantism, and especially Lutheranism, is really a Babel of confusion, I, a young man of nineteen, experienced only too soon. There was a minister Buehl on board our ship, who introduced himself to me as a Lutheran "pastor" of the Missouri-synod. When he heard that I was going to study Lutheran theology at the seminary of the Iowa-synod,—he made a very compassionate face, saying that the named synod was not Lutheran at all. In general he said—and it was almost correct!—that the German established churches were not Lutheran any more, and that, consequently, Lutheranism was becoming extinct in Germany. He, however, praised to me the Missouri-synod as the only true Church, whilst the Iowa-synod had fallen into heresies. He said that the latter taught a carnal, sensual chiliasm (thousand years' reign), consequently a twofold, visible coming of Christ, in contradiction to the Apostles' Creed: "from thence he shall come to judge the living and the dead;" that it had a false doctrine of Sunday; of the ministry; and of the church, etc. These explanations somewhat alarmed me and made me cautious, so that upon my arrival in New York I intended to inquire more closely and impartially of the two missionaries, stationed there, to take care of the immigrants, of the Iowa and Missouri-synods. But I did not consider that, since the subjective judgment is very uncertain, it would not be an easy task to decide *which* of the two synods was Lutheran, and which was *not*. So few are the marks of the "Lutheran Church" as such, that one Lutheran synod can deny the Lutheran character of the other, and thus it becomes an *impossibility* for the common layman to discover the right one; for there is no su-

preme ecclesiastical authority in Protestantism, because its innermost nature and essence is an opposition to *every* authority. After having landed safely, I consulted both missionaries, one after the other. But the brevity of time, and the great bitterness, with which each of them explained his special point of view, made it impossible for me to conceive thoroughly in what manner the two synods differed, and having received a rather disagreeable impression of these disputes, I could do nothing, but simply obey the authority in Germany (of course an *usurped* authority) and leave for St. Sebald, Clayton County, Iowa, where at that time the synod still had its ministers' seminary. After the friendly reception and the exerting studies, and in consequence of all the new impressions, these experiences were soon forgotten, and afterwards nothing lay more distant from me, than the Catholic Church. To me it was a matter of indifference that on the evening of the day of my arrival (October 6, 1873,) a memorial service in honor of a deceased benefactress in Russia was held by one of the professors. Of course no prayer was said for the repose of her soul, but according to Protestant fancy, an address was made in her memory. That was all.



## CHAPTER V.

### AT THE MINISTERS' SEMINARY.

SEMINARY life I liked much; especially pleasing was the fixed order, which was similar to the order of our Catholic Seminaries. For although this institution wanted to be real Lutheran,—the name "*Wartburg* Seminary" proved this—the founder (William Loehe in Neudettelsau, Bavaria) evidently belonged to the *Catholic* tendency (according to Graul, *Unterscheidungslehren*, p. 201, 12th edition). That proves his return to the order of the mass in his Agenda; the founding of an institution for deaconesses in Neudettelsau; the edition of a calendar of saints; his book "*Von der weiblichen Einfalt*," (simplicity of woman) in which he had the courage to praise the Blessed Virgin,—at least in opposition to the dead silence of the Protestants—; his accentuation of the ecclesiastical jurisdiction and government; the ministering of Extreme Unction to a sick person, but especially his efforts to introduce private confession—and many other things. Therefore the professors of this institution, at one time scholars of Loehe, followed the footsteps of their master at least in the first years of their activity; and for the same reason it soon became impossible for them, to agree with the strictly Lutheran Missouri-synod, although this had been Loehe's wish in the beginning. The original teachers' seminary in Michigan, which was founded by Loehe, soon became a ministers' seminary in clear opposition to the Missouri-synod.

Gradually I became accustomed to the order of things which was entirely new to me. At 6 a. m. we had divine service in common, in accordance with the old Catholic order of Matins: Hymn, singing of psalms, lesson and morning-prayers. Each class commenced with a short prayer. At 12 m. the bell rang "pro pace;" in Lent at 3 p. m. in memory of the sufferings of Christ. At 6 p. m. it rang again for a short evening-prayer, till at last the students were called together by the bell at 9 p. m. for night-prayers (Completorium). Between these devotions were the different classes and the study-time. On Sundays we walked four or five miles to the church at St. Sebald. (How Catholic the name sounds!) Here—especially the first Sundays—I as well as some others received an almost Catholic impression. Whilst in the churches of Mecklenburg everyone sits during services, as if glued to the benches, I here found the old Catholic order, of course somewhat changed, so that the congregation *knelt* at the Confiteor, "Communion," etc. It was also new to me that the whole congregation recited or sang the responses. But soon I became accustomed to this, and I liked it. It was, perhaps, the *Catholic* spirit in it, which pleased me, although I was not then conscious of it. Here I heard for the first time in my life of the "private confession."

But unfortunately this did not last long. After Easter the seminary was removed to Mendota, a small town in Illinois. It was more pleasant for the students to live here; but the "ecclesiastical" life did not please me. The beautiful services at St. Sebald had now an end. In the parish-church, which we attended in the beginning, a United (i. e. Lutheran-Reformed) minister delivered dry and tiresome sermons; and his liturgy was just the contrary to the one of St.

Sebald. But we students were told, not to be scandalized, since according to Art. 7 of the Augustana it was not necessary for the true unity of the Church to have one and the same ceremonies. But I longed to return to St. Sebald, where I had also learned to love the people. Here in Mendota, however, the principal members, better bellwethers of the congregation, were Freemasons or Odd Fellows. But now the presidency of the synod urged that the masonic element be removed. This, however, was not effected without a struggle. I attended a meeting of the congregation, held for this purpose, in which the two parties became so excited that the leaders would have attacked each other, had not the one party withdrawn. This "robber meeting" in the church made a very bad impression upon my young mind. But the Freemasons and Odd Fellows won; on that account our seminary bought a small church, and the communion with the former was dissolved. But the new circumstances were taken into consideration, so that here very little remained of the beautiful services of St. Sebald. A table with a cover served as an altar, but without a crucifix. Nevertheless, I got permission to place upon the altar a small marble cross, so that it would not look so bare. The walls of course were, as is the case almost all over in America's Lutheran churches, without any pictures or ornaments whatsoever. At least at the evening services, the professors often laid aside their Lutheran cassock, and preached, the same as preachers of other sects, dressed in civil clothing,—in order "not to give offence to anyone."—In this church I delivered my first public sermon one Sunday at the evening-service,—but in spite of the professors, in a cassock—choosing as my subject the parable: "The kingdom of heaven is like unto a merchant seeking

good pearls; who, when he had found one pearl of great price, went his way, and sold all that he had, and bought it." (Matth. 13, 45-46.) It was, as if this sermon, delivered with warmth and enthusiasm, should be in a manner a prediction of my own future action, when I, strengthened by the grace of God, finally, after having found the "one pearl of great price," namely the Catholic truth, literally sold all I had, and sacrificed it, in order to call this pearl mine.

Sometime before this, I became acquainted with a fellow-countryman, C. S., who had recently arrived at the seminary, and we soon became friends. And this friendship (although he himself, incomprehensible to me, has remained Lutheran to this day) was to help me to become somewhat interested at least in the Catholic Church. He was a very talented young man, and influenced by the Catholic Church. He had had the opportunity to visit a Catholic Church now and then in Mecklenburg, in his native town Ludwigslust. So he would often narrate to me, how this church was situated so charmingly on an island in a beautiful grove, and how he sometimes would go there, especially in Lent, and how he sang or prayed the beautiful mournful litanies; how he had often sat at the foot of the choir-steps, and shed tears of emotion. Then again he expressed his dissatisfaction with the laxness of the professors regarding the divine service. He also gave to me the words and melody of a Catholic lenten litany, which we often sang together alternately in our room; I also learned the "Prayer for the dead" from him. So this intercourse could not fail to awaken my interest in the Catholic Church. This interest of mine increased by several visits to the Catholic Church, which I made in Mendota at that time. Once it was just the day of the First Holy Communion of

the children. This celebration left a lasting impression on my mind, even now I can distinctly picture to myself the crucifix, which to me did not seem to agree with the "Roman justification by good works." "Ah," thought I, "could you but only preach in so magnificent a church the 'true Gospel' to so many people! What a pity that this is a church of *Antichrist*!"—Such wisdom namely our professor had taught us students in ridiculous contradiction to the "Missourians," who say, "the Pope is Antichrist." In the beginning, although this doctrine was not quite clear to *me*, I *tried* to believe it; but the longer I studied, and the more I learned to reason logically, the less *could* I believe it. But we were told expressly, that this doctrine did not belong to those "which separate from the Church," *although* every *good* Lutheran ought to believe it (!), so that on its account the ecclesiastical communion, for instance with the Missouri-synod, should not be dissolved. From this I concluded for *myself* that in this point I could believe what I *wished*. But it shows a very lax conscience, if educated, theologically instructed men, try to make their students believe such a thing, thus imbuing them with fanaticism against the Catholic Church! Or should such well educated Lutheran theologians be able to believe such an invention themselves? Should they not know from Church History, how the papacy was at all times the bulwark against the rude heathen powers, who stormed against the Church, and against all the enemies of Christ, the son of God? And yet it should be antichristian? O ye Lutheran fools, only take the pains once to look into a Catholic prayer book!—do you not find the name of *Jesus* on almost every page?—And the mass in the Catholic Church, which you detest, is not Jesus Christ the first and the last, the Alpha and Omega, the begin-

ning and the end of it? And yet you have the miserable courage, to spurn truth, and to say, this church is that of antichrist?—Certainly your aim is not the sincere truth! If simple people, unversed in Scripture, maintain such an opinion, they can not be blamed;—but *you?*—You only seek to check the truth by injustice!

The greater part of my first summer vacation, I spent in Hallowayville, with Rev. Nabholz, a neighboring minister of the Iowa-synod, who was nominally a Lutheran, but had been educated in reformed Basle. The church lay beautifully upon a hill; but its interior with its pulpit above the altar, which was draped with black, and covered with various books in the greatest confusion, in connection with the bare white walls made a *melancholy* impression indeed! This lack of taste in the Protestant churches, however, entirely corresponds with the Lutheran doctrine; and the melancholy interior also quite agrees with its *doleful existence*. The sermon unduly takes the foremost place, and in it the people are told again and again that they can gain eternal happiness by faith *alone*, without good works, that the veneration of the saints is unnecessary, yes, even harmful. For this reason the Lutherans conscientiously banish all pictures of the saints from their churches; they lay no stress upon the outer ceremonies of their services, and every minister or congregation,—just as the former or latter becomes master—does in this regard, as he pleases.—During the second school-year I was now and then sent out to preach in neighboring places. Preaching was a pleasure for me, and as to theology in general, the longer I studied, the better I liked it. But not by any means did I study everything mechanically, but tried on the other hand to form *my own judgment*. But I must confess, that I never could understand the Lutheran doctrine con-

cerning "the Church"—in fine, everything is dissolved in mist and fog: in an "*invisible church!*" It seems to me that in this point they tried to approach the Lutheran Missouri-synod, whilst the latter did not wish them to draw nearer, moreover it stigmatized the leaders of the Iowa-synod as clerical forgers in its paper "Der Lutheraner," and honored them with the title "heretics." No wonder that I, as a young student in conversation with ministers and members of the congregation, generally had to hear as the most interesting subject for discussion: "The controversy with the Missouri-synod," so that the people found but very little time to ponder earnestly over *their own salvation*; thus religion was almost degraded, making it the subject of witty and humorous conversations, and pastoral care was often neglected. Everyone of course, sided with his own respective synod, so that one was often reminded of *competition in business*.—This variance and discord of the Lutheran "Church" at times showed itself very clearly even *in the seminary* among the students. For here they had come together from various established churches of Germany, and everyone bringing with him the doctrine and the ceremonies of his respective "Church." Therefore it could not be helped, that sometimes among the students disputes arose concerning doctrine and ceremonies, and that parties were formed. So ex. gr. "the Hessians" were accustomed to the Reformed rites, whilst in doctrine they were generally Lutheran, but here again, especially in regard to the doctrine of Vilmar, concerning the ministry, they differed from the Iowa-synod. It will be easily understood that for this reason it was no easy task for the professors to preserve peace and unity among the young students.

It is indeed praiseworthy, that in this seminary great care was given to the spiritual welfare of the students. The sermons were Lutheran and sincere, especially those of Prof. S. Fritschel, on the Epistles of the ecclesiastical year. But since he generally followed the text closely, the Catholic ideas contained therein were expressed—certainly without his knowledge as I suppose. We also had a “bible-class” once a week, in which one of the professors tried to explain a passage of the New Testament using the Greek text as basis. Since we were at liberty to select the text for the bible-class beforehand, my friend Sabbann and I sometimes looked for such passages, which offered great difficulties to Protestant (Lutheran) Exegesis. Thus, for instance, Hebr. 6, 2, regarding “imposition of hands” and Acts 8, 14-17, where mention is made of Confirmation. For this reason our professor did not exactly know how to explain such passages. Otherwise this bible-class certainly was not without benefit to us, especially whenever the professor explaining the passage would give expression to the Catholic spirit contained therein, and would not place into it his own private opinions, which, however, was the case often enough. Once the explanation of a passage (Luke 4, 18, 19) in one of these classes gave me the courage to make use of the “private confession” for the first time in my life, late in the evening, notwithstanding the strangeness of such an action in the eyes of the other students, since the majority only went to the customary confession in common. Perhaps this determined confession was not altogether without benefit to me according to St. James 5, 16, (Therefore confess your sins to one another, etc.), although one could not speak of a real absolution, since Lutheran ministers have no divine commission.—Here I wish to make mention of the

celebration of a Lutheran wedding on the occasion of the marriage of the seminary "house-father." After the nuptial ceremony at the church (at St. Sebald) the newly married couple received the Lutheran communion—evidently an imitation of the Catholic order. Then the celebration was continued at the seminary in a very pleasant and appropriate manner. Dancing (as it *unfortunately* occurs at Catholic weddings so often) did not take place, and in general was not indulged in, in this congregation; in the afternoon, whilst beer was passed around, a merry conversation took place, which was intermingled with speeches and songs. In this manner the time was gayly spent, certainly better than if mind and body had been fatigued with exciting dances until late at night, or until morning.—

My last summer vacation before my departure from the seminary I spent at St. Sebald as curate *pro tempore*, which place I liked much on account of the beautiful ceremonies, and the ecclesiastical taste of the people. Here my sermons were always received with great applause. But I shall also mention a very *characteristic* incident. I had chosen as song before the sermon a hymn (my favorite hymn), by the convert *Johann Scheffler*, called "Angelus Silesius," since it harmonized so well with my sermon. My "Pastor" forbade this, and commanded me, to have the congregation sing in its place the hymn by Luther—in which *nota bene* the good works are ridiculed—:

"Nun frent euch, lieben Christen gemein',  
Und lasst uns froehlich *springen*," etc.

(Rejoice, dear Christian congregation, and let us joyfully *jump*.) and where in the third verse it continues:

“Mein guten Werk’, die galten nicht,  
 Es war mit ihnen verdorben;  
 Der *frei’ Will’* hasset Gott’s Gericht,  
 Er war zum Guten *erstorben*,”

(My good works were of no avail, they were all in vain; the *free will* hates God’s judgment, it was *dead* to good deeds) and finally in the tenth verse:

“Und huete dich vor *Menschensatz*,  
 Davon verdirbt der edle Schatz”—

(And beware of *human ordinances*, by which the precious treasure goes to destruction)—as if the *entire so-called Reformation* had not been but *one* “human ordinance!”—In the hymn, which I wished to have sung, it said:

“Ich will Dich *lieben*, meine Staerke,  
 Ich will Dich lieben, meine Zier,  
 Ich will Dich lieben mit dem *Werke*,  
 Mit immerwaehrender Begier;  
 Ich will Dich lieben, schoenstes Licht,  
 Bis mir das Herze bricht.”

(I will *love* Thee, my Strength, I will love Thee, my Honor, I will love Thee with the *deed*, with everlasting desire; I will love Thee, loveliest Light, until my heart doth break.)

The “Pastor” was kind enough to give me permission, to have this hymn sung *in the afternoon* during Christian Instruction.—

At the seminary, especially during the last months, I made good use of the library. I found in it Luther’s notorious table-discourses, which disgusted me. They are like swine sniffing at all the beautiful flowers of a garden. I also found Doellinger’s Church History. When my professor saw this famous book in my hand he said: “Well, Brother Eberhard, I do not think that it will do you any harm.”

—No, dear Professor, thanks be to God, although Professor Doellinger himself apostatized, his book has done me no harm whatever, but on the contrary I have only profited by it, and it has helped me to find the Church, which he himself so perfidiously abandoned.—I believe it was on this occasion that I made utterance, candidly telling my professor: “If I had to choose among all the sects, setting aside the Lutheran “Church,” I would *prefer* the Catholic Church.” He answered hastily: “You *have* not to choose any more!”—*Nevertheless! I have done it*—much later it is true—I searched impartially, and through God’s grace I have made my choice, and acknowledge that there is but one true Church, the One, Holy, Roman Catholic Church!”

So at length the time for my departure from the seminary drew near. During this time I studied with especial diligence, since it seemed to me as if I had just begun with my studies, and I was wishing that I could remain at the seminary longer. Had this wish of mine been fulfilled, with God’s grace I would perhaps have acknowledged the truth of the *Catholic Church* at that time, and finally would have entered a *Catholic* Seminary, and would have become a priest. Did the professors have some kind of a presentiment? Suddenly one day I received orders to go to Waverly, Iowa, since I was “just the right man” to become the minister of the congregation at that place. I was thunderstruck on receiving this information, (especially since the term was not finished) for I would have gladly studied longer; on the other hand I was rejoiced at the thought of entering upon my duties as minister in so short a time. My entreaties to remain were of no avail—I had to obey.

## CHAPTER VI.

### MY EXPERIENCE AS A YOUNG MINISTER IN WAVERLY, IOWA.

**F**IRST of all, according to Protestant custom, I had to deliver my trial-sermon; it was on one of the first Sundays in Lent, Protestant better: Passion-time, since it is the maxim of Protestants neither to fast during this time, nor at any other time of the ecclesiastical year. I preached on I. Cor. 15, 1-10 before a large congregation, and after the divine service I was unanimously chosen. In my native country, Mecklenburg, my election would perhaps not have been so unanimous, since there the beautiful Protestant acquisition can boast of having the liberty, to choose *one* of *three* candidates. How this is done, one can easily imagine, who knows the people, especially that of Mecklenburg. Wine and beer, gossip and marriage, etc., also all sorts of whimsical opinions are often the deciding motives at the election. Thus I remember a nice anecdote in this regard: In front of the gate of the church-yard, through which the three had to pass, was a little mud-puddle. It was decided upon by the smart farmers that *he* of the three who would walk directly through it, was to be their man, and receive the position. Every one was eagerly watching the three candidates as they approached. The first one walked around the puddle, like a cat around hot broth, the second one took a short run and jumped over it, the third one was so lucky as to walk directly through it. He was

chosen.—Setting aside everything else, how can the people judge a minister by a single sermon? Of course I did not have to defeat such rivals at my “trial-sermon,” but from the beginning it was made clear to me, by the fact that the *people* elected me, that I should become the *slave of the congregation*. So the principal matter was now settled. I was chosen! Therefore the examination “*pro ministerio*” was about to begin. Now, it is somewhat similar to the appointment of teachers to the public schools of our country: If one has the School Board and the people on his side, the examination will be found good. Now, I do not intend to say, that little was demanded of me, I had to hand in a written examination, etc., and then had to pass an oral examination in the theological branches before the Board of Examiners. Interesting to me is the recollection, that they just examined *me* so sharply in the *Protestant doctrine concerning justification*, as if they *anticipated something*. However, I was not ordained at once; they perhaps did not deem it necessary. Why, I know a Lutheran minister in Australia, who is not ordained at all, and who would have looked upon it as an insult, if anyone reminded him of the fact. Upon my request “President” G. declared himself willing to grant my wish regarding ordination. According to the genuine Lutheran view, ordination is nothing else but a *public* ratification of the appointment made by the congregation; but no one can understand why this is, since the election is performed publicly; for through the nomination or calling the congregation has made known its will, to confer upon this respective person, as its minister, the right to perform the different functions of his ministry.

During the week preceding my ordination, a dear old man of the congregation wished to surprise me agree-

ably. He led me into the church. Upon the altar, of course veiled with mourning (the favorite color of the Protestants), I saw to my great delight a crucifix, which a lady of the congregation had brought from Dubuque, evidently from a *Catholic* book-store; and unsuspectingly I expressed my delight to this old man. But when the "president" had heard of this, he rebuked me severely for my "imprudent" speech. These were only *outer* things, he said, and I should not lay any stress upon them. This would spoil the congregation. He was not pleased at all that the congregation *knelt* at the Confiteor, and that I *sang* several parts of the liturgy. I, however, appealed to Loehe's "Agenda," which had been introduced, and to the congregation who seemingly had sung the responses with pleasure. And this seemed so important to the good "president," that he afterwards reported it to "higher authority" in Germany. At last the day of my ordination was fixed. I requested him—N. B. according to old usage in Mecklenburg!—to give me the Lutheran communion at my ordination. But there I just came to the right one. He told me, that the congregation would take scandal (!) at this, as at something Catholic, and although I requested him earnestly, he refused it point blank. I wish to remark that afterwards I reported his refusal of communion to the authorities of the Mecklenburg "Gotteskasten," but received an unsatisfactory reply. On March 3, 1876 I was ordained; but *without* communion! Well, what was the difference, for bread and wine were certainly of no use to me. So he was right after all. But that the crucifix which he thought was superfluous in church, is necessary, yes, even a blessing, the following incident shows: A farmer came to church with his son, who was about twelve years old. The boy who never had seen a crucifix, notices it im-

mediately, and turning to his father asks him in his dialect: "Vader, wat is dat foer en hoeltern Mann dor?" (Father, who is that wooden man there!)—

After entering upon my ministry, it was my aim to establish a household of my own. I, like all ministers, hardly considered the question, whether celibacy or matrimony was preferable; for like many others see to it in due time, so I also had chosen a companion for life. However, it was not my intention to marry so soon, at any rate I wished to get used to my new vocation. "President" Grossman, however, was of a different opinion. Therefore he tried all means available, to place the advantages of a speedy marriage in a bright light; as he said, it was much cheaper to live in the married than in the unmarried state. I married March 15, 1876, at the age of twenty-two years. God bestowed upon me a good wife, of whom I can say commendably that she has never hindered me in the performance of my duties as minister; but I must remark here how strange it was that "President" Grossman *urged* me so much to get married, and insisted upon it that I published my "engagement" to my congregation *at once*. By doing this he perhaps not only wished to prevent all speculations of mothers and their marriageable daughters in regard to my humble self, but also to tie me immediately with the bonds of family-life, so that later on I could not do as I pleased, but would rather have to do as it would please the congregation, and thus become its *slave*. This speedy marrying of young Protestant ministers really seems to be suggested by the fear of the possibility of "becoming Catholic." For if a man is once married, no doubt, his family will prevent him from doing so.

But how did it look to my congregation? And for what reason had my predecessor left the same? But he had not left the *congregation*; the congregation rather left *him*. For, as it was his duty, he had taken vigorous measures against the nuisance of dancing. And what was the consequence? One portion, as it is the prevalent custom of the Protestants in such cases, separated from the congregation, and since these people were received by the "sister-synod" Missouri with open arms, they immediately received a minister and built a church of their own. In this condition of disunion and consequently of great excitement, I found the congregation on my arrival. Therefore, I spoke of peace in the first meeting: "I beseech you to be careful to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of *peace!*" But to effect a union of the parties was not possible on account of the present animosity; I had to be satisfied to keep my own congregation in unity. And this was no easy task. *The spirit of hatred and discord had even entered into the families*, and often separated man and wife from each other, even more so than is sometimes the case in a mixed marriage. This was disgusting, and in the first years of my ministry it showed to me *with the greatest evidence* the Protestant disunion. In the separated part of the congregation there was a woman, who in her fanaticism for the Missouri-synod, kept her party continually in glowing excitement. Once on my way home from church I incidentally met her. I took advantage of the opportunity to ask her to return to the lawful congregation. She blankly refused to do so, as she said it was against her conscience to belong to a synod which held a false doctrine; for, as she continued, the Iowa-synod taught a millenium, according to which *Christ* would again appear visibly upon earth, in order

*to suffer and to die* anew. Since however, the latter was only her wrong comprehension of the chiliasm of the Iowa-synod, one can see from this incident a striking example, how perniciously doctrinal controversies—which are always in vogue among the Protestants—must affect the multitude, and especially so when they are intentionally spread among the people by their ministers. Not only are they hereby incited to hatred against those who hold a different opinion, but also their attention is entirely diverted from the operation of their own salvation, as I have seen this often in my experience as minister.

But the unity of my own congregation was to be disturbed very much, not so much from the interior as from the exterior—by the dear “colleagues;” partly by those of the neighborhood; partly at times by those who stopped off at Waverly on their journey. Because I wished to make practical use of Loehe’s “Agenda,” which had been introduced of course only on *paper* by the synod, and I also succeeded in my congregation without any difficulties; for instance in the introduction of kneeling at the Confiteor, whilst I said with the Psalmist: “Come let us adore and *fall down*.” (Venite adoremus et *procidamus ante* Deum); these fraternal ministers, to whom perhaps the old ecclesiastical ceremonies seemed too Catholic, since they hardly understood anything about Liturgy, *secretly worked* against me in my own congregation by siding with the people and by trying to prejudice them against me. Of what kind these “pastors” (shepherds) were, the reader may judge from a remark made by one of these gentlemen. He was a genuine smirking child of Berlin. When I referred him to the dignity of the ministry and made mention of its purpose to herd, i. e. to lead the flock, he gravely said, that the “pastor”

was nothing else but the *first sheep* in the congregation (!). I was much amused and not at all inspired by this original view or argumentation. I only thought: "Indeed, *you* are a good sheep!" More, this slave of the congregation certainly could not be. Happily, however, through private study of the writings of the Marburg Professor, Vilmar, I had arrived at an entirely different conviction, so that I did not allow myself to be treated as a "sheep" by my parishioners—(much less by the rams)—but, acknowledging my own unworthiness, always laid stress upon the authority of the "ministry." Alas! In my ignorance of the Catholic Church I even went so far as to refer in earnest the words of the Savior to my (Lutheran) ministry, which had received neither authority nor commission from Christ: "He that heareth you, heareth me, etc." (!) But I soon learned that in the Iowa-synod unity existed as little as in my congregation. In the summer of that same year a Synodal Convention was held in the neighboring Maxfield. I attended, but took little pleasure in the quarrels and disputes there, and I must confess, the transactions left me rather indifferent. I had left a young wife at home, and naturally my thoughts were more with her than with the tiresome speeches of these Lutheran philosophers. But it had become too lonesome for my wife, who was at home all alone; in order to surprise me she followed me, but not to preach peace at the Synodal Convention as "ministerial sister" (as a "ministerial brother" once styled the wives of the Lutheran ministers), thus far, in Lutheran congregations, women were not permitted to speak publicly; but only in order to welcome her husband, and to help me pass away the time. On the Sunday following we returned home, and a minister with whom I was

acquainted, delivered a sermon in my church, which was not only directed against the Missouri-synod, but also *against the Catholic Church*, which did not please me on account of its severity, which was especially manifested against the Catholic Church; besides it was read.—

Meanwhile I had always been keeping up correspondence with my friend Sabbann. Since he dared to have his own opinion concerning some points of the Lutheran doctrine—which according to Protestant principles every one can have by reason of the “independent research”—this friendship had bad reactive consequences for me. Especially when this student was at last “expelled” from the seminary, because he did not in the least agree with Prof. S. Fritschel’s principles and had joined the Buffalo-synod, I was looked upon with suspicion, especially by the “president” and also by others. Therefore the former condescended to have a “fraternal conference” with me on account of these incidents. Although I declared that Sabbann’s affair had nothing to do with me, since I certainly agreed with some, but not by any means with all of his views, I consented to this conference, and just about escaped with a black eye, since I knew how to express myself cautiously. On this occasion I was, as it were, examined again. I was asked concerning “church-government” according to Art. 28 of the Augsburg Confession of Faith, furthermore regarding “Private Confession” (according to Art. 11) and “divine service” (Art. 7 and 15). As I said, it ended “graciously.” (We, however, were compensated for the trouble undergone at the conference with a splendid supper at my home—). At a pastoral conference however they tried to attack me still more. Bredow the *son-in-law of the “President,”* (who by

the way, has one of the best and fattest benefices of the synod) proposed the question, whether by dropping "Private Confession" the Confession of Faith of the "Lutheran Church" would be violated. I answered with a decisive "Yes!" and appealed to Article II, of the Augsburg Confession of Faith, to old Lutheran ecclesiastical laws and so on. All the other "ministerial brothers" however unhesitatingly professed Bredow's "view" with "No." Nevertheless I remained true to my conviction as the only correct explanation of the doctrine, and emphatically laid stress upon it that every good minister must work to that end to erect this old venerable institution in his congregations again. (A Sisyphus task indeed!) Since the synod tolerated different tendencies in its midst, I said that, as no doctrine of faith necessary to salvation was touched upon, I expected at least toleration for *my* opinion.

During this time I kept up a correspondence with my father in regard to my views, especially those concerning the doctrine of "church and ministry." With the Lutheran Protestants this doctrine belongs to those about which they are confused the most, because everything should be founded upon *the Bible alone* and therewith the doctrine of a "*church*" must cease by itself. Only the Lutherans of the Missouri-synod in America make an exception in this regard, since they have indeed formed a real Lutheran "doctrine of the church" according to Luther's writings. But to them ecclesiastical jurisdiction and ecclesiastical priest-hood are identical and by "church" they understand an *invisible* communion of the faithful—but of what creed?—which should extend invisibly through all the sects; an old heathen idea, which was also the foundation of Plato's view of the state. I could by

no means assent to such absurd and blending opinions, because they stand too evidently in contradiction to Holy Scripture. In this regard I followed the "*Catholic tendency in the evangelical christendom*" following Vilmar and others. According to him the sacred jurisdiction in the New Testament has not its origin *in the congregation*, but according to the principle: "Pastors are called by pastors" it is directly derived from the jurisdiction of the apostles. There I also found the *visible church* more emphasized, which is not, like single heaps of sand beside each other, composed of single parts without an organic relation, but having from the beginning stood as a whole, the whole attracts the single parts, and not perhaps vice versa. This seemed to me to agree with the Augsburg Confession, whilst on the other hand I could never make the latter agree with the Schmalkalden Articles.—I came by a Catholic newspaper once, the "*Wahrheitsfreund*," but it did not appear to me to be antichristian, and did not in the least agree with the picture of Catholicism as it had been pictured to me from my early youth. I consequently became a diligent reader of the same. For further information I secretly ordered three Catholic books at Benziger Bros., one of which I had found among the books of a Lutheran minister, namely the interpretation of the holy "Our Father" by Alban Stolz; the second book was a Catholic catechism, and the third, "The Dogma of the Infallibility of the Pope" by Weninger. I devoured these books, but at that time did not take the trouble to study them *thoroughly*; to examine them carefully, and to take them into consideration. My father, to whom I often communicated my doubts, especially those concerning the *domineering* of the congregations here, and to whom I openly expressed my

views concerning the ministry and the church, referring to Vilmar, Kliefoth and others, *did not seem to like these* theological researches, as he wrote to me once: "Instead of only living for your congregation you seem to hit upon all kinds of theological questions." Consequently, *I should stop thinking*, as it might harm my congregation, and had it not always been my pleasure and delight to edify my congregation? Would this not be the case, the more the minister is absorbed in the understanding of the Word of God, the more he has gained in its knowledge?—Therefore my congregation only had the benefit of my study. I did not look upon myself as the servant of the people, but as a servant of Jesus Christ, this view of my ministry only gave me humility, courage, and joyfulness for my new vocation. Nothing more beautiful did I know, than to preach on Sunday; nothing did I like better than to hold divine service according to the old and sublime ecclesiastical liturgy; and my congregation loved me—with but few exceptions. To these exceptions belonged a man, by birth "Reformed Lutheran," who was "shocked" by the beautiful form of the services. In particular he was displeased that I, as he said, always sang the words "Let us pray!" before the collect; for it was a falsehood every time, since I *sang* and *did not pray* (!). I went to him—but of no avail. I called a meeting; but it was useless: He remained of the same opinion. But he prejudiced the congregation against me to such a degree that I was forced to declare after services once that the singing of the collect was "not Catholic," and I had to omit it entirely in order to maintain peace. Moreover the "dear colleagues," who likewise disliked my manner of holding divine service, although it was in accordance with the introduced "Agenda," diligently

assisted such fools as S.—. This came to light at a “visitation,” which was suddenly held in my church in January, 1877. I only wish to state here in brief that the congregation was proclaimed “right” in all things, I, however, was wrong in all things. Perhaps to please me my wife had remained in church at the end of the evening service which preceded the meeting in behalf of the visitation; but the evident injustice on the side of the Rev. “Visitors” excited her to such a degree that she came home almost ill. From the report read by me on this occasion, in which I answered several questions asked by the “Visitor,” I will only make mention of two questions, both of which might be of interest. Is the conduct of a “Pastor,” (Bredow in my neighborhood) who had declared himself willing in answer to an enquiry by one of my parishioners to accept his child for “Confirmation” which I conscientiously could not “confirm,”—is such conduct authorized? 2. It is allowed to accept people of this place belonging to the Missouri “gang” as sponsors at baptism? This second point was answered with “yes,” and the first was “daubed over.” Lastly an opportunity was given the congregation to rid themselves of me in a “respectable manner,” “President” G. *letting them vote*, whether they wanted to “keep” me or not. The majority was for me and I was “permitted” to remain, and neither the “dear colleagues,” nor the “kickers” of the congregation could get rid of me. But it may be of interest to many, that at this act of voting a woman ran over to her husband who wished to remain sitting, and seizing him by the arm made him rise and vote for me. Of such a “church-visitation” a *Catholic* can have no idea. The congregation, which suffered itself to be instigated, could, of course, with the aid of the “dear colleagues” clear itself as “the highest court of justice.”

One consolation during this time was not only my friend Sabbann, but also an experienced minister. The latter told me once, how it caused so many difficulties to introduce a beautiful ecclesiastical order for divine service. But he had told his farmers in their dialect, who by no means wanted to kneel in church during prayer: "Wenn ji nun nich knien wilt, so makt ju ens de Duewel knien!" (If you do not want to kneel now, then the devil will make you kneel some day). But these had calmly answered: "Wir wollen's halt nit geduh!" (We won't do it). On the other hand, the introduction of incense at divine service had been made easy for him by the simple remark "that the same was good against flies and mosquitoes" (!).—Upon the whole the introduction of an order for divine service, or the purchase of necessary things often causes the greatest difficulties to the "pastor" in all Lutheran churches separated from the state, as he is entirely dependent upon his electors, the majority of his parishioners. But, how God at times evidently punishes such "rams" of the congregation, who oppose the good out of ignorance or malice, an incident shows after the purchase of our new cemetery, which the Catholic congregation sold to us. A member of the congregation opposed the minister at the meeting—with the remark that he "did not need a cemetery for a long time to come." But what takes place? He dies soon hereafter, and his body is the first upon the new cemetery.

In the meantime I had an opportunity to learn the advantages of the celibacy of the Catholic clergy. In February 1877, a son was born to us, in consequence of which I had to remain up during the whole night, and had to preach on the following day, entirely unprepared. As a result of the long illness of my wife I also had to perform the duties of a nurse; as celibacy

has its dangers and temptations, so also has the married life of a clergyman. If one considers the great advantages of celibacy, one certainly must with St. Paul give preference to the latter.

Since I was in this manner occupied with domestic cares, my enemies could now the better pursue their secret agitations. However I did not mind them, but persistently continued upon the chosen course. So it came to the erection of a parish-house and school in the spring of the year 1877.—But not long was I to occupy the new house. In autumn the bomb exploded, which had been thrown into my congregation by the “colleagues,” who believed themselves to be perfectly authorized to do so, because I “was of a different spirit than they.” The few enemies found good support, so that in a meeting of the congregation they dared to make an attack upon me: In order to maintain peace in the congregation, it were the best if I would resign my position! But I declared that I deemed myself bound to this congregation, and as there was no reason why I should leave, I would not let myself be removed by the congregation, contrary to all regulations, but only by the “church-government” or “president.” The latter in the beginning suggested to me to resign *voluntarily*. I told him, that I would only leave, if he would take the responsibilities up *himself*. Being at once satisfied, he then made me the proposition to seek a pastorate in Dakota; probably I would then be out of the way—“*exsilio dignus*” (worthy of exile). Since I had waited for months in vain for an assignment to another position, “I took my leave” from the Iowa-synod, to accept a position in the Buffalo-synod, which my friend Sabbann had procured for me, although I had applied for a position in *Australia*.

## CHAPTER VII.

### MY EXPERIENCE AS MINISTER OF THE BUFFALO- SYNOD IN EDEN.

WITH new hopes, but alas!—in order to meet with new disappointments, I set out for Buffalo with my small family. On our way thither we stopped off at Roseville, Michigan, where my friend Sabbann was stationed as “administrator.” When he described the circumstances of that place to us, we soon learned that, although he lived in “Roseville,” he was by no means bedded upon roses, but in reality upon thorns. The thorns were the disagreements and controversies in this congregation, which was divided into four different parties. One part wanted to be “*Missouri*”—Lutheran, the other “*Ohio*”—Lutheran, the third “*Iowa*”—Lutheran, and the fourth “*Buffalo*”—Lutheran. Each of these synods sent its messengers, in the appearance of black-garbed “angels,” into the congregation, in order to draw them avariciously into the “alone saving” synod. What means were employed one will understand when he learns that those inclined to the “Missourians” had nailed the picture of their deceased minister of the Buffalo-synod to a pig-pen, which was covered with nasty drawings, to the great amusement of the minister of the Iowa-synod. A law-suit was even instigated on account of the church property, in which the two Lutheran synods, those of Iowa and Buffalo, had each other by the ears, again showing the “unity” of the Lutheran “Church.” For, if the differences between the in-

dividual synods were only mere insignificant shades of opinion,—why quarrel? Why does one synod try to rob the other of its congregations? Why do they even go to the civil courts (against I. Cor. 6, 5: “Is not among you any one wise man, that is able to judge between his brethren?”)? Does it not look as if every synod really believed that it alone is the saving one?!

But enough of this. Having arrived in Buffalo, I preached on Ephes. 2, 14: *He is our peace!* 1. What *Christ* has done that he *would become* our peace. 2. What *we* must do, in order that He *becomes* our peace.—The old school-teacher there told me after this sermon that I had spoken *from the bottom of his heart*. I believe it. For *the heart of every man*, even that of the *poor, lamentable Protestants*, yearns for *peace!* But alas, they preach “peace! and still there is no peace.” Yes indeed I was to experience this also in the Buffalo-synod, although I belonged to it for only seven months.

In the congregation, whose minister I now became, there was no *peace*. The “Missouri spirit,”\* i. e. the real Lutheran spirit, had caused devastations. The parish was a ruin, consisting of a handful of loyal members of the Buffalo-synod who had remained true to it, and of a somewhat larger number of families who returned from the Missouri to the Buffalo-synod, but had remained “Missourians” at heart. For this reason they were continually quarreling with the loyal members of the Buffalo-synod. A law-suit had been carried on between the Missouri and Buffalo-synods on account of a church which belonged to the Buffalo-synod. This church had to stand empty and unused many years; another

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\* NOTE—Under this title Rev. Grabau once published a book against the Missourians.

smaller one was built, in which services were held for the united Buffalo-Missouri-congregation, since the "Missourian" part of this congregation was driven out of its large "Missourian" church, of which the "United" had taken possession. What kind of an impression these Protestant synodal affairs make upon simple Catholics is shown by the following little incident: Once a *Catholic* lady came into the Lutheran parsonage, inquiring for some one she wished to see after the services. When she was told, he did not come to church any more, but was going to the "United" church, she was thunderstruck and said: "Good heavens, I suppose one year they attend church here and the next year there!"—The very same experience I had in later years: To-day some Protestants are Lutheran, to-morrow "United," and the day after to-morrow they have become Baptists or Congregationalists! On the other hand, whenever *Catholics* apostatize, they as a rule become *unbelievers*.

In order to attend to my mission-church, I had to pass through the city of Buffalo, where I visited the venerable Rev. "Senior" Grabau, who always received me affectionately. He was one of the "veterans" of the persecution of the Lutherans in Prussia at the end of the 30's and courageously defended himself against the violent state union, and stood up for the rights of the Lutheran creed. He had suffered imprisonment and persecution on account of his faith. Finally he emigrated with a part of his congregation from Erfurt to Buffalo. What a pity, such a man sacrificed so much out of love for *so hopeless a cause as that of Lutheranism!* How sad that he never came to the understanding that he had suffered and struggled for a wrong cause! What would have become of so determined a man, had he known the Catholic Church!

But alas! this church he hated, perhaps even as much as the Missouri-synod, against which he fought his lifetime and which consumed his vigor. I remember well the mockery which he uttered on the occasion of the crowning of Pope Leo XIII., March 3, 1878. I never dared to speak to him of my sympathies with the Catholic Church. Nevertheless I gave alms in *his* house, secretly, to a Catholic girl who was collecting for a Catholic orphan asylum in Buffalo, when the Lutheran rectoress had curtly refused her. I know how happy it made me to have done a little for *that* church, which on account of the grandeur of its success—in spite of the hostile powers storming against her—I had always *admired!*

I took a special liking to the dear old "Senior" Grabau. With the same pleasure with which he related to me some of his experiences I listened to him. Among other things I was especially interested in his story about the misguided mind Ehrenstroem, which is very instructive. For he, having been minister in the vicinity of Buffalo, had drawn the correct conclusions from the so-called formal principle of Protestantism: "The Bible alone, and nothing but the Bible!" According to this principle, the *reading* of the Bible is necessary for salvation; he had not, perhaps, taught reading to his farmers, for the most of them certainly knew how to read; but since the Lutheran translation by no means affords a security of its correctness, this wise man had deemed it necessary to teach the farmers Hebrew and Greek (!), in order that the members of his congregation would be enabled to read Holy Scripture in its original text! He is said to have escaped to California in company with twelve girls. Perhaps he, like Thomas Muenzer, had found polygamy "divinely" commanded in the Bible. Old Gra-

bau related this to me, without perceiving in the least, that finally by consequent reasoning Protestantism must always lead to such extravagances. Grabau had not only suffered much in Germany, but also in America, in his own synod, he had extremely unpleasant experiences. In 1866 almost all the members of his synod "deserted" him; and at first he continued the Buffalo-synod with a very small number of adherents. He was yet to see the downfall of the opposing party. In spite of all these experiences of the disunion and confusion in Protestantism, he did not become a Catholic. On the contrary he lived and died for the hopelessly sad cause of Lutheranism.

As in all congregations of the Buffalo-synod, so also in mine the so-called Lutheran "private confession" existed according to Art. 11 of the Augsburg Confession of Faith. But like many other things in the Buffalo-synod, so also this institution had sunken down to a mere *formality*, because it lacked the real *foundation upon doctrine*. For this reason, as has lately come to my knowledge, they have *at last "dropped" the "private confession" here also* (against Art. 11 of the Augsburg Confession of Faith). Here I certainly had a good opportunity to care for the soul of the individual; since, however, this was not always possible on account of the disposition of the "confessant," I generally had to be satisfied with the recitation of the learnt formula for confession.

Once when I tried to make use of "confession" as a real confession of personal sins at the sick-bed of an elderly man, I unfortunately had a sad experience. The man, although sick unto death, became delirious and lifted his hand up against me, so that I had to take leave. He died soon thereafter without confession,

and was then simply buried by a "colleague" of the synod with all ecclesiastical honors.

As concerns the worship of the Buffalo-synod, here I at least found ceremonies *of the synod* in the divine service, and everything was not left to the individual congregations as in the Iowa-synod. But the Agenda differed from Loehe's in many points; thus, for instance, the Confiteor was placed after the sermon, and then again the Epistle and Gospel were even *sung* in many congregations, according to Catholic custom. For these and other reasons then, this synod was also reproached by others with "catholicising," for which reason it saw itself compelled to publish a book in its defense under the title: "Is there Papacy in the Lutheran synod of Buffalo?"—For as is known the Protestants think "scent" something Catholic wherever one observes order and ecclesiastical ceremonies, and does not look upon the Lutheran ministry as the office of bell-wether or "first sheep."—Here, it is true, I found a fairly clear doctrine concerning the church, since they taught that the church is visible, but a person soon felt oppressed when he heard, that *the Lutheran Church and no other* (whereby one plainly discovered that here, especially only the Buffalo-synod was meant) *was this visible church*, founded by Christ himself (!). They also did not hold that the ministry proceeded *from the congregation*, but taught, that it was instituted by Christ in the Church, independent of the congregation. This shows, that the Buffalo-synod approached the Catholic doctrine in *something*. For this reason they were reproached with "catholicising." But nevertheless they tried to avoid the semblance thereof as much as possible, which appears from the formula that was used on the occasion of the public installation of the trustees, in which among others this passage oc-

curs: "Luther is indeed the angel with the eternal Gospel," (in perversion of Apoc. 14, 6), whereby in their Lutheran enthusiasm "it entirely escaped their notice that Luther was by no means so near to the end of the world as the angel who prophesied here. *Also* a nice example of Lutheran interpretation of Holy Scripture! Therefore, they also despised the "Popish Church" so much. When I once communicated at the celebration of the Lutheran communion in my new congregations, as I was accustomed to do in the Iowa-synod, I was reproved for this by the "Senior Ministerii" with the correct observation that this custom was not Lutheran. For Lutheran communion, consisting of bread and wine, can easily be dispensed with by the minister, and he only needs to receive it now and then from one of his equals, whenever it pleases him.

I always preached with pleasure, although I gradually began to notice that in reality I was not able to find the Protestant doctrine of justification in the Gospels of the ecclesiastical year, and much less in the Epistles, although I was taught in my Lutheran Pastoral Theology to bring it in in every sermon, or at least to hint at it. This seemed to me to be a dissonance, which would not—as many other contradictions in Protestantism—dissolve itself into harmony. My "pleasure for the ministry" was also severely put to the test, especially in my congregation at Ebenezer. On the ninth Sunday after Pentecost I *intended* to preach here on the Gospel of the destruction of Jerusalem; however, my intention was not carried out. The organist was absent. Since a well-known hymn was sung, I let the congregation sing without organ-accompaniment, and according to Lutheran custom, and as I always did otherwise, had remained in the sacristy

during the singing. I was "commanded" by one of the trustees to come into the church immediately, in order to play the organ. This I refused to do, since I did not deem it necessary, whereupon this man furiously slammed the sacristy-door, and with a loud voice interrupted the singing and the divine service. What should I do? I thought of Jesus how he wept over Jerusalem; and since no one of the congregation stood up against this "bell-wether," I left the church and went to Buffalo on foot, in order never again to see this "congregation." Now, I only had the one congregation at my place of residence, and it did not last long, and differences also arose here. For the lawsuit which was brought by the Buffalo-synod on account of the church, had been decided in favor of the latter. For this reason there was great rejoicing among the small original Buffalo-synod-party of my congregation. Since "confirmation" was close at hand, I thought I would cause the children and their parents some pleasure by announcing that they were to be "confirmed" in their old church. But the original Missouri-synod-party of the congregation was vexed at this and did not want it. What should I do? In order to do justice to both parties I *divided* the children, and performed the ceremony twice. Under the circumstances I would perhaps have done better had I omitted this Lutheran "confirmation" entirely; given up my ministry, and—become a *Catholic*.

But at present I was not so far yet. It is true, I thought of becoming a Catholic, but in reality I was still very far from this. Just during this turbulent time I had again received an inquiry through a German minister, whether I was willing to follow a "vocation" to three "Old Lutheran" congregations in *Australia*; tired of the miserable conditions and long-

ing to get out of the many quarrels between the different synods I said "yes!" Strange as it may seem, the thought struck me: You are going to Australia, in order to become a Catholic there!" I dissolved the relation with my congregation, the greater part of which saw me depart with tears in their eyes, especially the original Buffalo-synod-party. They had hardly gotten into repossession of their church with its large parsonage and garden—and now I departed. Yes, it was also hard *for me*; however, I left with the certainty, that it was so the will of God. Also the dear old Grabau was very sorry to see me take leave, after I had been a member of the "Ministerium" of his synod for only seven months. And although Grossmann, President of the Iowa-synod, had written a cordial letter to me, in which he tried by every means to dissuade me from going to Australia, and, moreover, urgently requested me to remain in America and to return to his synod, I could not step back, but true to my once given word, I believed it my duty to accept the calling to the far-distant Australia.



## CHAPTER VIII.

### MY VOYAGE TO AUSTRALIA.

SO now I was going to Australia!—But we were to practice patience for a time, until we could say farewell to America, since the far-distant congregations had not sent all the necessary traveling-money, which took longer, than I had at first thought it would. For this reason we first went to Wisconsin with our two little boys,—it was in the fall of the year 1878—in order to spend a time there with some relatives of my wife. On the way thither we could easily have lost our lives, had not the ever faithful Shepherd and Guardian of his flock sent his angel to protect us. For when we, being unaccustomed to the continual shaking of the train, had at last gone to sleep, we were suddenly awakened by a violent, terrifying shock. Then our car suddenly came to a stop. I could not find out so much that some kind of an accident had happened. However, none of us were hurt, and nothing more was to be feared, we lay down again and slept until late in the morning. The first thing I did, was to go outside. Then I saw how great a danger we had been in. Perhaps a mile distant from the sleeping car the engine and the tender were lying in a ditch, whilst the other cars had been brought to a stop at about half the distance between the engine and our sleeping car. About half-past three o'clock in the morning, the train had jumped the track, (for a wreck had caused this involuntary delay) and only towards nine o'clock, furnished with a new engine, we could continue our journey.

Since our departure for Australia was delayed until the beginning of February, I now had time enough at the home of our relatives to meditate on the experiences which I had gone through. But in order to make practical use of my time, I preached now and then in the neighborhood, whenever I had the opportunity to do so. At one time I was also god-father, and saw, how carelessly a Lutheran minister of the Wisconsin-synod baptized. For he moistened "the tip of his finger" with water, and from it he then let a few drops fall upon the forehead of the child. Although the quantity of water does not make baptism valid, the validity of the same seemed to me *doubtful* when using such a small quantity. Upon the whole *this* parsimoniousness with the water made a rather peculiar impression. At all events the Catholic Church has good reasons at the reception of converts from the Lutheran sect, with regard to the question, whether or not they are baptized validly, to use the greatest caution, if no real certainty is to be obtained in the individual case, to administer conditional baptism. The order of the divine service of this minister also seemed rather queer to me; for instance he had placed the "common church-prayer" in place of the Confiteor *at the beginning*. Here I again received an impression of the fundamental destruction, even of the little, which is still left of the Catholic worship to the Lutherans. Besides, the minister of that congregation did not seem to feel happy under the prevailing circumstances. Among others he complained, that his son, who was studying at a Missouri-Lutheran-Seminary, had plainly expressed the Calvinistic doctrine of predestination in his sermon, which he had once delivered at his place, with which he, the father, could not agree. This was again an example of the unity of the Lutherans; and I

was indeed very glad, that now I could soon, as I hoped, after having escaped all this confusion, build up my congregation in peace on the other side of the Pacific Ocean.

During this period for the first time in my life I got to see the inside of a Catholic prayer-book "*Taegliches Lob Gottes*" (Daily Praise of God), by Capitular Sigrist. One of my relatives had found it on the street, and I received it from him upon request. When looking through it, I was astonished, how fervent and devout the prayers were and that so very little of the "Romish leaven" was to be found therein; of course the prayers to the saints were at that time still stumbling-blocks to me.—Now, I also had a good opportunity, to see *the obnoxiousness of private interpretation of Holy Scripture realized by a practical example*. A brother of my wife had come to the conclusion, by reading his bible, that the "Seventh Day Baptists" with rejection of the Sunday and celebration of the Saturday were right, that on the other hand all other Christians were wrong, and that the celebration of the seventh day was absolutely necessary for salvation. When I tried to refute him, I thereby found out that *a refutation is only possible on principle of the authority of the Catholic Church*, which has instituted the Sunday. However, I did not want to give him this to understand, I could not refute him thoroughly, for, although in various passages of the New Testament mention is made of the first day of the week as the day, on which the congregation assembled, there is no *command* in any part of the New Testament, by which the Sunday is expressly instituted.

In January, 1879, we had not yet received all of the necessary traveling-money (180 Lbs.—\$900) we were on the point of taking the cheaper route to

Australia by way of Europe; but it was good, that upon the advice of our relatives, we dropped this plan, as that steamer, which we most probably would have taken, had an accident and *went down*. But we were not deterred from our resolution,—and at last the long-expected letter from Australia arrived.

In the early part of February we began our long journey in God's name. First of all we went to Omaha by way of Chicago. It seemed to us a bad omen that on the way to the latter-named city, we had to lay over for about two or three hours, since, this time, only one or two cars had jumped the track. But we did not lose courage. In spite of this delay we arrived in due time at Chicago and then also safe at Omaha. From here on the journey began to get interesting for us. Certainly it was no pleasure-trip—with two small children. Since we had taken the sleeping car, we nevertheless tried to make it as comfortable as possible for ourselves, and to combine as much pleasure as possible with usefulness.—As we now passed over the endless seeming prairies of Nebraska, which extended wave-like as far as the eye could see, already a premonition of the still solitary ocean, I had time enough to let the past year, with its experience, pass before my soul, and to meditate on the distant Australia, where new tasks awaited me. Thereby I felt like a bird, which, after having escaped the nets of the fowler, is allowed to enjoy the precious liberty. I was glad, being liberated from the pressure and bondage of Lutheran synods, to possess perfect liberty, so to lead and herd my new congregations as it was best according to my conviction at that time. Yes, this synodal-business: A “church-government” without divine commission, caused by the principle of temporal advantageousness only in order to tyrann-

nize the congregation through the synod and the minister through the congregation—under pretext of the assertion that every congregation has perfect liberty to belong to a synod or not (!!). If it is not necessary to belong to a synod; *for what reason* then to have synods? Probably, in order to cause unnecessary expenses to congregations and ministers, since every single congregation, yes, every single member of the congregation can certainly find the way to heaven much cheaper without a synod, with aid of his Luther-bible by faith *alone* (!).—Indeed, I never agreed with these principles, and was glad, that the fundamental element of my new congregations coming from the “Old-Lutheran” synod of Breslau, there were prospects of joining the same. This synod was a rare exception (thereby certainly deviating from Protestant principles), since it taught that the Church was a visible organism with divinely willed church-government, which no individual can shun without sinning. So I hoped—by joining this synod—to escape “Independents consisting of contradictions” with my new congregations, but certainly not thinking that you may avoid Scylla, but not escape Charybdis.

It is fortunate that man does not know his future. Therefore we could without care engage in viewing and admiring the majestic beauties of nature. It is not my task, to give the reader here a description of our journey. For if anyone wishes to read the particulars of the romantic tour with the Union Pacific R. R. over the Rocky Mountains to San Francisco, he only needs to take in hand one of the many existing respective descriptions. Laboriously, in ever repeating winding curves, pressing closely to precipitous, often towering gigantic looking walls of rock, leaving the tops of the trees far below, the engine here climbs up

the mountain; panting and but comparatively slow it drags along its heavy burden, and it often seems to the traveler that he is almost at the same spot, whilst the train nevertheless has already climbed up the mountain a few miles again—and with admiration one enjoys the grandest views upon lovely valleys and lofty heights, surrounded by the purest azure, illumined by the bright rays of the sun, which make the morning dew on the grass blades appear like glittering diamonds.—Unobservably, and continually one passes onward above hills and valleys,—towards his destination—the same as also in the real Christian life. Thus it often seems to us that after years of struggle we have made no progress whatsoever; but if we look backward, we can see, how God's grace has elevated our heart, and brought it nearer to the heavenly destination!—

Powerful was the impression, which California made upon us: A world with eternal spring suddenly opened before us—who were coming out of icy winter. And now at last the most beautiful of all! San Francisco with the “Golden Gate” in the rays of the setting sun as if dipped into gold! It was an aspect so beautiful that I was reminded of the “Golden City” with the golden streets, the celestial Jerusalem, the last destination of the Christian on his mortal pilgrimage!—

We remained in San Francisco a few days, for on February 17,—the same day, on which a year later our oldest daughter Clara was born—the “City of New York” was to leave the harbor. In the meantime we looked at the beautiful sights of the city. Among others I also visited a Catholic school and a Catholic Church. Here at the portal of the latter I immediately noticed a high cross with the inscription: “*He that shall persevere unto the end, he shall be saved!*” and I sighed to God, to give me strength ac-

according to the bounty of His grace, to persevere and to overcome all difficulties.

Then I frequently saw the Lutheran minister Drewes there, whom most likely the sad state of ecclesiastical affairs in Germany had driven to America, where he, of course, found still greater confusion, therefore he thought of returning to Germany, where he then, as I read in the papers later on, had again fallen out of the frying pan into the fire. With him I spoke about the doctrine concerning "church and jurisdiction," also concerning "private confession." In most of the points we agreed.

The day of our departure had come, and we rocked upon the waves of the Pacific Ocean. Of what consequence this rocking is to most of the passengers, every one knows, who has ever made a voyage; for this and other reasons I would rather abstain from describing the effect of the same. It is a kind of revolution of the stomach, which does not come to an end, until the former has given up its contents—just as four hundred years ago in the Church peace was not restored until Luther with his abominable errors and his adherents were excommunicated by the Holy Church.—It was very interesting to me, to find *two Catholic Missionaries* on board. The one was a Frenchman, the other a Belgian by the name of Beissel, with whom I became very familiar within a short time. *This* acquaintance was very welcome to me, since I now had the best opportunity to still my hunger for the Truth directly from a Catholic source. O, how often did we, the dear Catholic missionary and I, at that time his "step-brother," walk arm in arm, up and down the deck! How often did we sit together in a quiet, pleasant corner of the upper saloon, and how patiently he answered my questions! Subjects of conversation

were the doctrine concerning Holy Mass, the Blessed Sacrament under *one* species, Confession, the Infallibility of the Pope, and the inspiration of Holy Scripture. Hereby I noticed upon what strong arguments the Catholic Dogma rests, and upon what weak legs Lutheranism staggers onward!—If I had not had wife and children, I believe I would have followed the good missionaries at once!—

With the exception of the two missionaries no other Catholics were on board. For this reason only Protestant services could be held on Sunday. These, however, which were conducted by the captain, did not agree with me at all on account of their tiresome dryness; but the song which I heard for the first time in my life on that occasion, and which was sung by beautiful voices with expression and feeling, made a deep impression upon me, so that it has ever remained in my memory and has become one of my favorite songs. They sang, and the roaring of the billows sounded like the accompanying strains of a powerful organ, and solemnly it floated over the waters:

“Nearer, my God, to Thee;  
 Nearer to Thee!  
 E'en though it be a cross  
 That raiseth me;  
 Still all my song shall be,  
 Nearer, my God, to Thee,  
 Nearer, my God, to Thee.  
 Nearer to Thee.

Though like the wanderer,  
 The sun goes down,  
 Darkness be over me,  
 My rest a stone;  
 Yet in my dreams I'd be

Nearer, my God, to Thee,  
 Nearer, my God, to Thee,  
 Nearer to Thee.

There let the way appear  
 Steps unto heaven;  
 All that Thou send'st to me,  
 In mercy given;  
 Angels to beckon me  
 Nearer, my God, to Thee,  
 Nearer, my God, to Thee,  
 Nearer to Thee."—

And in my heart it re-echoed: "*Nearer, my God, to Thee!*"—and even now after many years I hear the echo of this song resound in my soul: "*Nearer to Thee!*"—Yes, God be praised! This voyage has brought me *nearer* to God in the Catholic Church and to His true presence in the most Blessed Sacrament,—"*very near to Him!*"—until, as I hope, He will one day have entirely heard our poor singing upon the dangerous waves of this life:

"Then with my waking thoughts  
 Bright with Thy praise,  
 Out of my stony griefs  
 Bethel I'll raise;  
*So by my woes to be*  
*Nearer, my God, to Thee,*  
 Nearer, my God, to Thee,  
 Nearer to Thee!"—

After a voyage of eight days our ship landed in the harbor of Honolulu, the capital of the Sandwich Islands, and the two missionaries disembarked, whilst I remained, with a longing in my heart for the Catholic

unity!—But years were to pass before I was able through the grace of God to still this longing!—During the two weeks that followed, nothing of importance took place—only once the boilers were too hot, and the flames shot out of the funnel, so that we were all in danger of being blown up with the ship. After all, under the protection of our guardian angels, we arrived in safety at Auckland, New Zealand. And although the “*Pacific Ocean*” on our way from there to Sydney did very little honor to its name, since the sea was often so rough that no longer anything was to be seen of its clear azure color, we at last steamed into the very beautiful harbor of Sydney (in the middle of March, 1879), very tired of our journey; and we were now upon Australian soil, in the “world turned upside down.” That we were indeed in the “world turned upside down” we noticed at once by many things, and later on we were to experience it still more. The water was *warm*; and when for this reason I ordered beer, it was also warm. Our stomachs, too, unaccustomed to the climate, almost lost their balance, so that frequently we had very little rest at night. But although at first we had a longing for America, we were soon to learn that we could also become accustomed to the new circumstances; and I was to find out how dear Australia would become to me! For God’s ways were not at all “antipodal” in leading us thither, since there He gave me the grace to find the One True Church. His name be praised!



## CHAPTER IX.

### ARRIVAL AND EARLY ACTIVITY AT BETHANIA ON THE LOGAN RIVER IN QUEENSLAND.

THE trip from Sydney to Brisbane, the capital of Queensland, aboard one of the smaller coast steamers, by means of which traveling is effected on those coasts, was made in about two days. This much smaller ship, although the water was pretty calm, rocked much more than the large ocean steamer, and my wife was again very much effected with sea-sickness. After having left Sydney on Friday, March 1, 1879, we hoped to arrive in Brisbane on Sunday, and thus end the trials of our journey. But our hopes were only partly realized. On Sunday afternoon we arrived in Moreton Bay, and when we were about to enter the Brisbane river we experienced a sudden shock, and—no one can describe our fears!—we had run upon a sand bank! We soon became calm, however, since we were told that there was no imminent danger, and that we merely had to wait for the coming tide, with which we would then—(although only on the following morning)—enter into the river. Thus it happened. Expectantly and anxiously we looked towards the land from the deck, admiring the beautiful banks of the river, decked with white villas and lovely gardens in their choicest verdure. Everything smiled at us in the most brilliant sunshine like a “new spring,” which the old heathen Ovid probably had in mind when he sang: *“Verque novum stabat, cinctum florente corona.”* Yes

indeed, here everything was verdant and blooming—like spring it appeared, adorned with blossoming garlands. Of all buildings the most prominent was the beautiful Catholic Cathedral, an edifice built of sandstone in the rich Gothic style, enthroned near the river banks like a queen.

Upon landing we were very cordially met by several trustees of my new congregation, and were also greeted most heartily by the German Lutheran minister. The latter escorted us to his residence, where he entertained us in a very hospitable manner. The same afternoon the journey was continued towards our new home. Upon our arrival in Bethania, the teacher with the school children had stationed himself near the newly-erected parsonage, decorated with wreaths and garlands, and they welcomed us with the rendition of the song: "*Danket dem Herrn!*" (Thank ye the Lord). Yes, we certainly had ample reason to thank the Lord for His protection upon our journey, and therefore we gladly and earnestly joined in. I delivered a short address, in which I admonished those present *always* to be grateful, since I knew from experience that especially among Protestants the people shout "Hosanna!" and on the morrow cry "Crucify!"—After the long journey across the ocean the fresh verdure of the fields was very pleasing to the eye, so that spontaneously Psalm XXII. recurred to me: "The Lord ruleth me: and I shall want nothing. He hath set me in a *place of pasture*. He hath brought me up, on the water of refreshment."

Thursday, March 27, was the day of my "installation." In front of the parsonage a great multitude had gathered, in order to march in procession to church with the new "Pastor." Otherwise the Lutherans are not exactly fond of processions, as a rule they only take

place at funerals; therefore the impression upon me was so much the deeper. I headed the procession with two "colleagues" at my side, the teacher with the school children and many parishioners followed me amidst the joyful ringing of the bells and the singing of a hymn, which on account of its intrinsic beauty and Catholic truth, I have not forgotten. Therefore, I believe that it will also be a source of edification and instruction to the reader, I will let it follow here. We sang:

"So geh' ich mit Vergnuegen,  
 Wo Zion's Huegel liegen,  
 Zu Salem's Thoren ein.  
 Ich falte meine Haende,  
 Lass Anfang, Mitte, Ende,  
 Mein Jesus, recht gesegnet sein.  
 Du gehest hin zu leiden,  
 Und ich, Dein Volk zu weiden,  
 Mein Bischof und mein Hirt!  
 Da wo Dein gruener Anger  
 Von Deinem Blute schwanger,  
 Von Deinem Schweisse fruchtbar wird.  
 Wie froehlich laesst sich's gehen  
 Nach Salem's schoenen Hoehen,  
 Indem Du mit mir gehst.  
 Mein Mund trieft ganz von Manna,  
 Man singt mir Hosianna,  
 Weil Du an meiner Seite stehst.  
 Mit Dir geh' ich und trete  
 Vor's Volk mit dem Geraethe  
 Des ganzen Heiligthums.  
 Die Kanzel wird zur Krippen,  
 Du ruhst auf meinen Lippen,  
 Du bist der Endzweck meines Ruhms.

Mit Dir fuehr' ich die Kinder,  
 Die kleinen, zarten Suender,  
 Beim Taufstein in Dein Reich.  
 Wie Du sie einst gekuesset,  
 Geliebt, geherzt, so fliesset  
 Dein Geist auf sie, dem Wasser gleich,

Mit Dir wisch 'ich die Thraenen  
 Von allen, die sich sehnen,  
 Mit Gott versoeht zu sein.  
*Wenn sie im Beichtstuhl zittern,*  
*Red 'ich in Ungewittern*  
*Von Deiner Gnaden Sonnenschein.*

Mit Dir weiss ich zu laben,  
 Die Durst und Hunger haben  
 In matter Seelennoth,  
 Denn, kann sie nichts mehr stillen,  
 So weiss ich sie zu fuellen  
 Mit Gottes Blut und *Engelbrod*.

Mit Dir halt' ich den Kranken  
 Den Zucker der Gedanken,  
 Des Wortes Labsal fuer.  
 Wenn ich die Schwachen staerke,  
 So segne meine Werke,  
 So rede, Jesu, selbst aus mir."——

In an overcrowded church (a handsome brick edifice with Gothic windows, and a cross upon the church-top which pleased me in a special manner), I delivered my "inaugural sermon" on Acts 6, 9-10. In the afternoon, however, the sermon of dear old Schirmeister of Brisbane: "And going forth, he (Peter) wept bitterly," made a deep impression upon me, although

the selection of *this* text at first did not seem very appropriate to me upon this occasion. It seemed to me, as if a *shadow* flitted across my rejoicing heart, with the presentiment: "In a similar manner perhaps I might fare with this congregation!"

Thus I fared with the Lutheran "Church" in general. When later the Lord looked on me in mercy, a bright ray of grace fell upon my poor heart—I wept bitterly over the Babylonian conditions of my "Church" and of my heart; left this sect and went "forth" to the true Church, in external *misery*, but nevertheless *consoled inwardly*. Of all this I certainly had a foreboding at that time; but as yet did not know it.

As pleasing the impression in the morning, so disgusting was to me what I heard in the evening. Differences were to be settled. The congregation at Philadelphia had not participated in the building of the parsonage, since it wished to have the house in the center of the three congregations; and for this reason now the people were placed under a quasi-interdict by Mr. Schneider, the most influential man there. Peace, however, at least outwardly, was only effected thereby that—since I was "called" for the three and not only for two congregations—I made an end to the affair by attending the opposing congregation the same as the other two, so that the former now promised also to pay its share of the expenses. On the Sunday following I drove to Elkana, my third parish, where I held services in a "slab" church. Every one rejoiced. One good woman said to me: "Here one can at least go to church on Sundays; in Germany, however, we had to work, and we hardly knew that it was Sunday!"—Very characteristic of the prevailing conditions in Prussia! This lady, like most of the members of this

congregation, came from the Uckermark, where the people must work like slaves for their "Christian" master, and as she told me, the servants only, as the poor subjects of the rich landlords, *were admonished to obey their master*. Different it certainly cannot be in the Protestant "state-church," which, having become a mere machine, is chiefly used in order to keep the people in good order—by the "black policemen," as someone once appropriately styled these "clergymen." But they veer from extreme to extreme, as later on (1886) I once wrote to Ludwig Grote, retired Lutheran minister in Basel: "Independentism"—I could just as well also have written: "Protestantism"—hardly spreads so much anywhere, as just there, where our Lutheran Church has disentangled herself from the embrace of the state and, like in foreign countries, has acquired an independent position. The sad truth of this sentence I always have experienced anew. The very same people, who in Germany permitted themselves to be enslaved similar to the sons of Israel in Egypt, make themselves the lords of their "spiritual fathers" as soon as they have become independent with their "Church," and would all prefer to exercise their presumed priesthood in a practical manner, if only it were possible "on account of order." This was especially shown during the two years' vacancy of these parishes. Although they could have requested ministers of the neighborhood to perform the most necessary clerical functions, it seemed more practical to these good people that they themselves make use of their right as spiritual priests. Therefore they really transferred the performance of these functions to Schneider, a blacksmith, who now baptized and buried in these three parishes, and who once even administered Lutheran communion to a sick person. When

asked by him in this regard, I could not approve of this, he simply retained his opinion, and thus he showed himself to be a man who wanted to know everything better than his "Pastor," so that soon enough I could have conceived the thought that here my "ministry" was in reality superfluous. Otherwise they were good people of a general Christian disposition, who attended church regularly.

When I held communion services on the holy days of Easter, comparatively many attended the same; and since the trustee Schneider, an Old-Lutheran from Silesia, told me that his mother was a Catholic, that he knew the "private confession" very well, and besides the congregation must have known from my letter that as a minister of the Buffalo-synod I would acknowledge no other confession, I concluded to begin with it at once on this occasion. In the first place I delivered a sermon, Holy Thursday, on "confession," according to Old-Lutheran custom, and had the pleasure to see all who had come as confessants come to "auricular confession." I certainly was contented with a "confession" expressed in general terms only, but thereby I came in closer contact with the individuals as pastor, and in this manner became acquainted with my parishioners much faster. More than ninety persons availed themselves of the opportunity to go to "confession" that day, and it lasted so long that someone had even placed food and drink into the sacristy for me.

For our support in general, sufficient care was taken. I had a clear income of two hundred pounds sterling (\$1,000.00), and we did not stand in need of natural products, especially sacks of sugar, which is abundant in Queensland. The people were good and of an affectionate disposition. Among other things they proved this by almost completely furnishing the par-

sonage, as also by the manner in which they had received me. As I said, the *people* were good—if only the “Church,” to which these belonged, were good in doctrine! Indeed it seemed to me, as if the “Catholic spirit had breathed upon” these three congregations, since here it was much easier than elsewhere to *introduce* the regulations of the old Church, but only too soon was I to experience, that “*appearances are deceitful,*” and that wherever no Catholic doctrinal foundations are laid, all institutions and good regulations, because built upon sand, are indeed quickly overturned by the first whirlwind. Certainly. Where the house does not rest upon *rock, upon which indeed the Catholic Church alone is built*, it must of necessity, because rocking upon the quicksand of human opinions, collapse as it were over night.

This was also my experience. *Christ* certainly could institute the Sacrament of Penance; this a human being could not do. And still I, poor human being, made a *foolish attempt* at it, as I was soon to see. For a time everything went well. Gradually a storm began to rise in the parish. The trustee Schneider, who, as the people called it, had during the vacancy held the “Notstands-Amt” (state-of-necessity-office!) first of all reproached me in private. As it was customary there, I held monthly conferences with the trustees of the three congregations, in which they were to consult with the minister and to decide upon parish affairs with him, according to the example of the Breslau-synod, which also has this custom. But only too soon I experienced, that these meetings only served the trustees to make themselves, if possible, the lords over the “pastor” and to make him their *servant*.—In order to gain some authority to fall back upon, and since in a letter addressed to me when still in

America I was told of the probability that this congregation would join the Breslau-synod; I made strenuous efforts to realize this project, the more so, because at that time I considered it the best synod on God's earth. But all my efforts in this regard failed on account of the opinion of the man with the "Notstands-Amt," who thought it were better to remain alone and then perhaps form a tiny synod of our own later on—and they all chimed in with one accord. In these conferences of the "Church-collegiate," as they loved to call them, they now began to grumble more and more, secretly or openly, against "auricular confession." Probably inspired by some of my "dear colleagues,"—who with a sort of jealousy, as it seemed, had for a long time beheld the new order of things at the Logan River—they put the question to me (cf. Luke 20, 3-6): "Confession, is it from heaven, or of men?"—If I had answered: "It is from heaven,"—they would then have at least expelled me from my "ministry," even if they would not have stoned me; if, however, I said: "It is of men," I would belie my conviction. I therefore answered: "A silly question needs no reply; just according to the sense of the same, confession is from heaven or of men." Nevertheless I could also have answered calmly: "It is of men!" Since the question only pertained to the *Lutheran* "auricular confession," not, however, to the *divinely instituted Sacrament of Penance*. In this manner I slipped my head out of the noose, which they held in readiness. In these conferences I brought about that the Catholic ember-days of the four seasons should be observed, and not any longer the Prussian "Landesbusstag" (state-penitential-day). Thereby I experienced how tenaciously these Prussians adhere to their "state penitential-day," once introduced by the Prussian King, which

is "celebrated" on the Wednesday following the Sunday *Jubilate*, very inappropriately during the joyful season of the church, although in Queensland we no longer had anything to do with *Prussia*. Nevertheless they appeared numerously in church on that day—contrary to the decree of the "church faculty." Since, however, they had come, I favored them with services and a sermon; certainly entirely unprepared—but, as I heard later on, it should have been one of my best sermons. (?) From this incident, however, one can see, how very much the "established church" has passed over, as it were into the flesh and blood of the Lutherans.—The same appeared from the deal with their "Porstschen Berliner Gesangbuecher" (hymn-books). For these had as a "beautifying" frontispiece the picture of the King of Prussia and his consort; the latter appearing dressed in a decollete gown. Before I let the people have the newly arrived hymn-books, I cut out these pictures, because I did not deem them at all proper for a hymn-book. But wonderful to say! Had it been a picture of the Blessed Virgin, they certainly would have *opposed* it, and in all probability have torn it out themselves; however, they complained *of the absence* of the "beautiful pictures." Yes, "these are thy Gods, O Israel that have brought thee out of the land of Egypt!"—

Now the "colleagues" also had a turn. Although, of course, we were not synodically united with each other, so that each one was entirely independent of church-government (excepting that which his own congregation sufficiently exercised or tried to exercise over him), the opposition of the "colleagues" against my practice, especially that of confession, was nevertheless disagreeable and grew continually, so that my parish was aroused against me. For this reason I

deemed it beneficial to hold several conferences with these "colleagues."—The first of these conferences was held in Brisbane at the residence of "old Schirmeister." In a preparatory manner we intended to consider the foundation of a synod; however, we could not come to an agreement in regard to the name of the child, which was as yet not even born, much less could we agree on questions of church-government—in which among Lutherans unity has thus far never been attained, nor ever *can* be attained, because church-government is considered as entirely *indifferent*. We therefore as a matter of course differed in doctrine. I defended the Old-Lutheran standpoint, especially in the question regarding "private confession," in which I was supported (only weakly, however), by but one minister, an *apostatized Catholic deacon*. Most of them however, defending the Reformed-Lutheran, i. e. "united" standpoint, since they had partly been sent out from Reformed Basel, partly from "united" institutions at Berlin, etc., opposed me. It was shown later on, we did not even agree on the doctrine of the Sacrament of Baptism. In the other conference, which was held at my residence in Bethania, the same questions were considered—without results—as the reader can see from the following passage, taken from the report of a Lutheran church-paper from the year 1880. "Then followed a discussion of the eleventh and twenty-eighth article of the *Confessio Augustana* (of confession" and "of episcopal jurisdiction"). Nothing is known of a resolution, when or where the next pastoral conference would take place."—In the same Lutheran paper also the following Lutheran nonsense could be read verbatim, which for the amusement of Catholic readers, I will quote here: "The paragraph of the church constitution, according to which the church

elders (trustees) must watch *ex-officio* (!) over the tenets and morals of the pastor, has been changed to the effect,"—just imagine!—"that hereafter it shall be a *reciprocal superintendence*." (!!). Thus they endeavor to remedy the evils in Luther's "Church," since they do not well know any other way to help themselves—torn loose from episcopal authority, which by God's disposition must watch over priests and congregations. To my sorrow I was not able to find out exactly what the fruits of such "reciprocal superintendence" may have been!—

In my parishes the trustees also tried to "*watch*" me, only with the difference that *they* did not want to be "*watched*," whilst they deemed themselves called to slander absent members of the congregation in the conferences—perhaps also "*ex-officio*," and whatever they had heard to the disadvantage of the "Pastor" to set afloat on such occasions, and in general to *help* him in all "official affairs," as if he alone were too young; too old or too weak to attend to the same, and that in such a manner that they endeavored to make themselves his masters. (But in spite of all their "*watching*," they could not prevent me from reading Catholic books which occasionally fell into my hands, I know not how. Not only did I read for my daily edification in the quiet of morning in the "*Imitation of Christ*" by Thomas A. Kempis or found pleasure in the "*Our Father*" of Alban Stolz; but once I was impressed in a special manner with the reading of one of his calendars, which had been lent to me by a Lutheran acquaintance, but originally belonged to a Catholic family in Brisbane. In order to give my congregation the benefit of it, I made use of the contents in one of my sermons, and in spite of their "*watching*" they failed to notice that I preached "*Catholic*" because

I “had not made mention of the “Blessed Virgin.”—) They endeavored to rule the pastor and through him the congregation (!). As good as the people were otherwise, the spiritual priesthood had swelled the heads of these trustees, so that they really seemed to believe, that the Holy Ghost spoke out of their decisions (!). How much, however, they seemed to enjoy it occasionally, if they could produce anything against the pastor, was shown by the story of one of the trustees: One day as I was on my way home from Elkana with my wife, a man of the congregation—known as a hard drinker—was sitting by the way-side. I was said to have told the driver to stop at once, and then have turned to that man and called: “You bull-head, bull-head!”—whilst my wife should have defended him, saying: “That man is talking real sensibly!”—Now it is true, I really had met this poor fellow—who was probably tipsy—on the way-side, but had not spoken to him. When I, therefore, in order to get to the bottom of the matter, called him to me on the following Sunday, he at first firmly maintained that I had called him thus! When I then began to reprimand him for lying, he confessed: “Yes, you said so, but—I *dreamt it*” !! This little joke I have mentioned, only to show to what follies this “reciprocal” or, for ought I care, “one-sided superintendence” may lead. (That poor sinner later on—hung himself.) Not long after, when these “trustee-conferences” had more or less turned out to be a clique, since they only inveighed against others, and wanted to “pick a hole in the pastor’s coat,” I simply declared them *abolished* as not being advantageous, but rather detrimental. But Schneider, the traditional “bell-wether” of the congregation, had nevertheless announced such a conference in a private house. When,

as a matter of course, I had not put in appearance, a "deputation" was sent to request my appearance; I, however, answered: Whoever announced this conference contrary to my order, may also hold it *without me*—and did not attend. In this manner these meetings ceased of their own accord.

Several members of my congregation no longer needed a "Pastor," since they themselves were "instructed by God," and as they said: "prophesied" in their conventicles—in misunderstanding of I. Cor. 14;—whether also miracles were wrought has not come to my knowledge. But I must confess that it appeared very odd to me, when I met a farmer—"colleague," who was returning from his "lecture-trip," in a tram in Brisbane. He had belonged to my parish, but by the *reading of the Bible* had gained the knowledge that the true Church was with the Irvingites—and among these—I could almost have been proud of the fact!—he had at once advanced to minister. (!)—In the first years of my pastorate in Bethania I had to contend with many such and similar fanaticisms, which in a special manner may probably also have had their origin in the fact that the old minister Hausmann, who called himself Lutheran minister, carried on his Methodist nuisance in my neighborhood. He was sent out from Berlin as missionary, had himself "ordained" by a Presbyterian in Sydney, and had then become a "Lutheran minister" in Queensland. He excelled in activity and zeal—and, at least in the first years, wanted to make ministers of all his parishioners. Whoever was not able to pray loud in original and self-conceived words, at church or at home, if requested by him, had to hear from him *that he was as yet not converted*, and only those were his converts who knew how to make speeches on their conversion and recite often the

most foolish prayers "by the yard." Whoever was then possessed with the greatest glibness of tongue, was the best convert!! Two converts of this kind were, it is true, also living in the parish of my residency, only they differed from the above-mentioned in as far, as they did not attend any meetings, but instead simply stayed at home with their Bible, and thus knew how to carry out in correct consequence the Protestant principle: "The Bible alone!" At the same time although they lived in constant feud, partly with their family, partly with their neighbors, they considered themselves elect children of God. In their favor I must say, I had found these genuine Protestants upon taking charge of this parish—that my predecessor probably partly gave occasion for this. His custom to read the sermon made a lady think of taking a well-known sermon-book along to church, where she then was able to follow the sermon word for word. Because the hearing of sermons is among Protestants the essential part at divine services,—who could have blamed this lady or the above-mentioned men, if they found it more convenient and comfortable to read the same sermon at home?! The Protestants are really flooded with sermon books; a person cannot understand at all why many of them nevertheless (most of them certainly have in practice already arrived at the correct *conclusion* of the Protestant principle of which one can convince himself by taking a look into the empty Protestant churches) attend church and build churches, since they could have everything much cheaper and easier at home!—Such people only make use of the "ministry" whenever it suits them, probably only at baptisms or weddings. This was also the case of old L., "Bible-Christian" at Bethania. When his son's wedding was to take place,

he sent for the old minister Hausmann, who was known to allow himself to be used everywhere as servant in exigencies by such people. Everything had been prepared for the wedding at the house, and a number of guests had put in appearance, but when the marriage ceremony was to begin,—the bride ran away and was no longer to be seen. (!) If according to old Catholic discipline the bans had been proclaimed three times, the scandal would probably have been avoided. As it was, however, the whole affair was “concocted”—and the bride was prudent enough to disappear in time.—

If I had hoped to serve the Lord in tranquility here in Queensland, remote from the wrangling disputes of the American Lutheran synods, I perceived that here I found again, essentially at least, if not on so large a scale, the same, which I intended to escape. Yes, the tumult of the wrangling disputes even floated across the waters to distant Australia. The horrible heresy of the Lutheran synod of Missouri of “*unconditional predestination*,” according to which God predestines some men to damnation, the others to salvation, irrespective of their conduct, had also been imported to South Australia and had been adopted there by the South-Australian synod as the most beautiful acquisition of the “Reformation.”

But that was not all. They also endeavored to disseminate this heresy among us in Queensland. This aroused my indignation to the utmost. I know I uttered at that time, *that I would rather become a Catholic, than adopt this doctrine!* I also wrote an open letter to that synod, in which I entreated them earnestly to renounce this heresy and to refrain from causing still more confusion and disruption. But in vain. They simply refused to publish this letter in

their "Kirchenbote."\* But how this agrees with the free research of the Protestants, I have never been able to ascertain. I then had this letter published in another church-paper there.—Dogmatical controversies have, it is true, often taken place also in the Catholic Church, they were, however, always ended, and definitely decided for all times. "Roma locuta est, res finita est." (St. Augustine). But among Lutherans, as among Protestants in general, such controversies everlastingly remain undecided, because they cannot be decided: each and every one can finally believe whatever he will. This can also be seen in a striking manner from the following passage of an article which appeared in No. 11 of the Australian "Kirchen und Missionszeitung" of the year 1884:

"Furthermore you write in the 'K. B.:' that you do not agree with our opinion of predestination. We certainly did not force it upon you. And: that you are the happy possessor of a Bible-instruction-work of the celebrated Doctor of Divinity, P. Besser, I will gladly admit; but you must also consider, that others also have one or more, written by very ancient and confirmed fathers of the church, who certainly can compete with Dr. Besser, as also by Dr. Luther, whom I esteem still more. (?) Now, since you have followed up the controversy, I hope you will also know that there were two parties in the S. A. synod who opposed each other, and that the one party declared: Missouri to be mistaken; the other declared Missouri to be in the right. Now it came before the synod that the controversy was to be decided according to God's word and revelation. And now the question arises:

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\* NOTE—The "Kirchenbote" in general excelled in its *hatred* against the Catholic Church, so that it loved to break out into invectives. Its favorite expression was to write "Hellish Father" in place of "Holy Father"—I therefore never tolerated this paper in my house.

*Was it done? And if it was done: which party has been declared right according to the Confession, and which one wrong?* For thus we find it in the Confession: We teach and believe, etc. And: We reject and condemn, etc. Well I ask once more: *Which party has been declared right and which one wrong? As much as I know and have seen from the 'K. B.,' every one can believe whatever he will, only one party should not attack the other.* Now tell me: Is this not mishmash and unionism?! This reminds me of an allegory. A woman went to the burgo-master and accused her husband. The burgo-master said: My dear woman, you are right. The woman went home in a happy mood and said to her husband: You see, I was declared to be right after all. Indignant at this, the man goes to the burgo-master and defends himself. The burgo-master then gave the decision: My dear man, you also are right. The wife of the burgo-master then says: My dear husband, but they cannot both be right! Whereupon he answered: My dear, you too are right.—And thus all three were right.—This, it appears to me, is exactly the case with your predestination.—

Finally I wish to remark: That we stand in no need of guardians; for we are of age, and *independent enough, to settle our own affairs ourselves.* (?)

Your friend

A. W.

L. in S. A., May 11, 1884."

Thus far in the church-paper.—Another had already given up entirely all hope for unity in doctrine in *this* life, and sadly indeed it sounds, what he writes in the same paper: "*I hope for no unity in this life, but I rejoice the more in the life to come.*" He was right: The hope of the Lutherans as of all *Protestants* in gen-

eral for a future unity, is vain, for the simple reason that Protestantism is in its essence the disorganization of all unity, so that its sects, cut off from the Catholic center of unity, must perish sooner or later like dismembered wandering stars (cf. St. Jude 1, 13).—

I could not join any of the three then existing Australian synods, because I was not able to agree with them. The Victoria-synod was “united,” indifferent in regard to its Confession, the South-Australian was Missouri-predestinating; and the “Immanuel-synod” on account of its queer “constitution” with “ordained” lay-elders—for reciprocal “superintendence”—did not attract me. And since in my congregation I was unable to bring about a connection with the Breslau synod of Germany—I remained alone with them.

I certainly had friendly intercourse with some of my “colleagues.” But this “friendship” was quite costly for me in the end, since among them honesty was often in danger. Only “Pastor” Gietzendanner in Toowoomba, whom I visited once during this time, was a gratifying exception. Since I knew that he had been Catholic, and had received all orders with the exception of priesthood, this was a welcome opportunity for me to discuss the Catholic Church with him. And it was indeed interesting, how he seemed to forget for the moment that he was now a *Lutheran* minister,—so ardently he defended *many things*, e. g. Catholic confession, and by this exposition he banished many of my prejudices. He had a Catholic wife, who also as the wife of a Lutheran minister still frequently attended holy mass, and had never formally joined the Lutheran sect, whilst her husband had without more ado been “ordained” in Melbourne by “Pastor” Herlitz upon his declaration that he now wished to be Lutheran. Upon my request he gave me copies of several

Latin prayers of the Catholic Church, and at the same time I heard many things regarding doctrine and institutions of the same, which was highly interesting to me.—My friend Goessling, minister at Walloon, I regret to say, acted differently towards me. But his intrigues and instigations notwithstanding,—for which he unfortunately often had an opportunity, since I frequently invited him upon festive occasions,—after all did not succeed in ousting me from my parish. It is true, he had remarked behind my back that on account of his health and the more pleasant climate he wished to exchange his for *my* parish; but when he saw that he would not succeed in this, he thought he would have to be satisfied to force upon my congregation at least one of his kind from Hermannsburg (Hannover). All of a sudden four “missionaries” from Hermannsburg made their appearance. None of us ministers, excepting Goessling and “Old Schirmeister,” had known of their coming beforehand. However, they were there; and in order that they might get positions, the other ministers were *now* informed of the fact. But that was a very difficult case, for “parishes” there were hardly any. As, however, the Hermannsburgers “did it cheaper” than the rest of us, all but one were finally placed with great pains and difficulty. This abundance in cheap ministers caused something like competition, so that partly the congregations made efforts to lower the salary, partly every little congregation desired to get a pastor of its own. I could not blame them. For if a person can have a ware cheaper, why pay more money for it? —Since there was no position obtainable for the fourth young man, I offered to take him along for the time being, so that he could assist me at Easter time. At such times I always had abundant work, because my congregations still cele-

brated the high feasts for *three* days. But to *me* he was of very little advantage; on the other hand he only looked for *his own* advantage, in order to get one of my congregations. Had he been frank and upright, I would even have been of assistance to him, for I myself wished that I could give one of my parishes away. Once I even went to "private confession" to him, but I first had to give him instructions regarding the same, since he knew nothing about it.—Nevertheless he wanted to know everything better than I, rejected the introduced Liturgy of Loehe, and during his sermons the people went to sleep.—Finally he sulkily took his departure.—



## CHAPTER X.

### DISSENSION AND SEPARATION OF TWO CONGREGATIONS AND THE FOUNDATION OF TWO SO-CALLED LUTHERAN SYNODS.

**I**N the meantime, however, a new "Reformer" had arisen for my congregation (as this seems to be necessary with the Protestants now and then) in the person of a Mr. N. from Berlin. He wished nothing more ardently than to be admitted to the Lutheran communion as soon as possible. Since in Germany he had belonged to the "Old-Lutherans," I asked him (as it is custom there) for his "dimissoriale." He had none. This seemed strange to me. But, so he said, he had left Germany so suddenly that he had forgotten it. This seemed still more strange to me. But at last I received him as a member of my congregation, with the remark, however, that I would see to his "dimissoriale." Having thus attained his end, he began to play "Reformer" in the congregation by arousing the people against me. He came from Prussia, he said to them, and was a member of the Lutheran "Church." Therefore he knew the exact regulations and ceremonies there: The pastor had no right to make it an obligation for the people to send their children to the parochial school, and to require private confession of them. The introduced Liturgy was Catholic, etc., etc. The support of the parochial school had long since been a burden to many, and the most were opposed to the "Catholic auricular confession." He succeeded, therefore, in getting a few

“bucks and bellwethers” on his side, who were surprised at his Lutheran wisdom (?). I tried to instruct and pacify them, but of no avail. This, however, was a good opportunity for the “dear colleagues” to help remove out of my congregations private confession and the school, which they neither had nor wanted to have in their own congregations. And, in fact, they helped so faithfully that soon—as some one in Brisbane had jokingly remarked—“1848 had broken out at the Logan River (i. e., Bethania).” The firebrand had been thrown into my congregation—and had set it on fire! Now was the time that the iron had become hot enough for the “colleagues,” and now in Brisbane a synod was going to be forged according to their ideas, whereby they thought they could certainly depend upon my congregations, which till then, expecting neither benefit nor true furtherance therefrom, had kept aloof from a “synod.” They only needed to stir the fire a little, and their underground work did not remain altogether without success. The bellwethers out-cried the well-disposed parishioners at the meeting, so that they could venture to request me to resign my “ministry” until New Year, 1883, and at the same time they received the promise from the old minister, Schirmeister and Goessling, that they would get them another minister from Germany, who at the same time should also attend a smaller congregation in Elkana, on Pimpama Island, which belonged to my parish. In all these things I was not asked by the “colleagues.” They simply gave the discontented right, and commanded and *divided* in my congregations, as if they had the greatest right to do so. It was of no avail that I protested against the unrightful encroachment upon my congregation on the part of Goessling and the “old Schirmeister.” They

simply did what *they* thought was best. But when the latter, as I called him to account for this, threw inexperience up to me, I answered that through his present manner of acting, which he had the courage to defend, I had just made a new, but very sad experience. And I thought to myself: "That's enough *to become Catholic!*"

But for a change, I must not forget to relate something amusing. The four imported Hermannsburgers had hardly been active for six months, when also four future "ministerial sisters" landed, who were to be united to the above-named four as "better halves." I almost neglected to attend this imposing ceremony at that time. Each of the "sisters" had herself led across the street to the church by a "ministerial brother," in order to be delivered to her future master. Fortunately no mistake was made thereby. "Pastor" Heiner of Ipswich had the honor to join in matrimony the four couples. Perhaps, however, it would have been better, if some one else had performed this ceremony, because this gentleman showed very little tact on this occasion. For in his wedding sermon on Gen. I 1, 28: ("Increase and multiply") he referred the young couples to the conjugal blessing only, expressing his joy that they also were to contribute in populating the blessed plains of Queensland. (!)—What does the reader think of this pastoral wisdom?!

Now they went to found a synod. Although synods certainly belong to the articles of luxury of Protestantism, nevertheless the want of a synod could be felt more and more; for *practically, Lutherans cannot avoid to make use of Catholic principles according to their need, whenever their own advantage requires it, although they make themselves guilty of the greatest*

*inconsequences.* If many private houses have articles of luxury, why should not the house, that Luther built, as a private institution, enjoy a few articles of luxury? Therefore a meeting was held at Brisbane (in December 1883), consisting of perhaps ten "pastors" and many laymen. At first they did not exactly know how to begin, only immense disunion and awkwardness became manifest again. When finally I proposed a plan for a synodal order to the assembly, which I had worked out before—with "episcopal government" (!)—according to Art. 28 of the Augsburg Confession of Faith,—so that every congregation and every minister *in spite of the synod* could not act arbitrarily just as before,—the assembly lost its tranquillity. Not till afternoon was peace restored, when a committee, endowed with "higher wisdom," proposed a few points for a synodal order. Although in spite of this, a synod could not be founded at the time, they nevertheless spread the news throughout the country that a new baby synod was born!—In reality they put it off another year, when their labor resulted in the birth of *two synods* instead of one! Yes, about fifteen ministers—and two synods! Two synods, who *both* called themselves *Lutheran*, although the one denied the Lutheran character of the other. Who was to decide here? I had withdrawn from the whole matter, as I was already beginning to partake unwillingly of the great "blessings" (!) of this "synodal house-keeping," since "the synod"—which however as such was in reality not existing—for the opposing party in my congregation at Bethania had applied for a minister from the city of Hanover in Germany. How they were disposed toward me, I could see from an anonymous postal card, which I had received immediately after the just

mentioned convention at Brisbane. In these lines I was ridiculed as "Lutheran Pope of Queensland," who had shed crocodile tears at the convention at Brisbane. That I had wept, was correct—yes, I could have shed *bloody* tears over the misery of the divisions of the "Church" to which I then belonged! But that I should be "Pope of Queensland," I could have nearly looked upon as an honor, since this no longer belonged to the impossibilities, as the following item from the 'Gotthold' of the year 1879 (No. 38) shows. It reads thus:

"A LUTHERAN POPE."

"On February 20, E. Zsedenyi, Inspector General of the Lutheran Church in Hungary or, as they say there, of the Church of the Augsburg Confession of Faith, died there. Whenever his Faith was threatened, he is said to have always taken vigorous measures, even against the Government; for this he was once even deposed and imprisoned in 1839, because he had declared himself frankly and openly against a so-called Protestant Law made by the Government. For his firmness in Faith, the title: 'The Lutheran Pope of Leutschau' was given to him. Such 'Popes' we Lutheran gladly tolerate."—Had they therefore only in reality "tolerated" me or some one else—for aught I care—as "Pope" or "Bishop"—it might have been well for the decision of the controversy between the two synods, as to *which of them was Lutheran and which not*, provided I had not acted liked that burgo-master giving *both* synods right: "You are right!" and "you also are right!" But aside with joking: The Lutherans the least of all will think of acknowledging any "church government" whatever, i. e. one of divine institution, so every minister and every member of the congregation is in the end of his own "Pope"

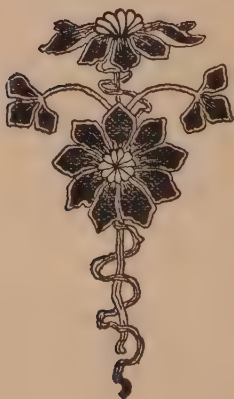
and infallible church-government, and every one believes and does what *he* wishes so that each and every one is in the right.

During this time I received the "dimissoriale" for N. from Berlin. My suspicion had not deceived me. He had been excommunicated by the "Church" there, for weighty reasons. This was the reason for his sudden departure from Berlin. I went to him at once, in order to admonish him on account of *this* wrong, as also on account of his *agitations* in my congregation. But, although I told him, if he would admit his sin, I would look upon his acknowledgment as made in *confession* against which he had opposed so much, and would keep it secret, he nevertheless steeled his heart. This was not to be wondered at, since other ministers, although the proof of his sin was evident, simply gave him right, letting him go to communion, without first having confessed his sin. That all this confusion had bad consequences for my otherwise religious parishioners, every intelligent man will understand, and that especially the authority of the minister suffered thereby, will also be easily understood. Especially was this the case in the main congregation at Bethania. But a short time before, I myself had with great pains collected the money for a new school house,—and it had not been dedicated and used very long—and already it stood there desolated, for the children attended the public school. Now, hardly any one came to "private confession," and they again enjoyed the "grand" so-called common confession—not as if *all* the parishioners were so disposed; the most of them had been carried away in the general confusion, whilst others had already given the reason thereof occasionally to Schneider, bellwether of the congregation at Bethania: "They are all afraid of your big mouth." (!) Most

of them, however, soon felt sorry for their disloyalty to their "Pastor;" but the past could hardly be amended, so that I could not remain there any longer in peace. Especially upon the youth in the parish these conditions had a very sad effect. When we, for instance, after having assembled in the parsonage for evening-devotion, sang and prayed,—a crowd of wicked youngsters tried to disturb us in our devotion by screaming and yelling. One of these disturbers, however, *died* suddenly, and I therefore made use of the occasion, earnestly and kindly to admonish these boys, who were present at the grave of their companion. The fruits of my admonition I could, however, see and hear again that same evening, since these wicked boys only yelled the more in front of our house. Similar experiences the teacher had previously had; when he had just retired with his family, often the most shameless speeches were addressed to him from the street.

Therefore I now determined to give up my congregation, in order to go to Germany—to the synod of Breslau, if feasible. But "man proposes, God disposes!" My other two congregations at Philadelphia and Elkana notified me that *they* would not "do the like," but wished to keep me as their "Pastor," and that they would build a new parsonage. I was rejoiced at this, whilst my enemies were chagrined at the news. In a meeting of both congregations the old relations were restored, and then they agreed to build a new parsonage at Philadelphia. As they were going to give me the same salary I had before, they wanted to have their *school abolished*. I declared myself against this proposal, since I would rather pay the teacher from my salary, and do with less myself. But they noticed something. That I would be satisfied with a smaller salary, certainly suited them,

but they wanted to pay the sum, agreed upon, to the teacher themselves. Beforehand I will remark that they did not pay him the promised sum, but on the contrary, repeated efforts were made to abolish the school. But as long as I was there, they did not succeed. The new parsonage, which was beautifully situated on a hill next to the Gothic brick church, was completed in about eight weeks and in triumph I now settled down in Philadelphia with my small family, where after all these conflicts, I could by the grace of God edify my congregation for five years in tranquillity, and serve God unhindered according to my conviction at that time.



## CHAPTER XI.

### FURTHER ACTIVITY IN PHILADELPHIA AND ELKANA, IN PEACEFUL SOLITUDE.

NOW at last I had obtained peace, peace, for which I had yearned so long, and tranquillity, both of which certainly are necessary, especially to him, who wishes to perform something good undisturbed. Of course there was some excitement at the arrival of the new minister from Hanover, who became my successor in Bethania. But when after his first sermon they went home rather disappointed, they soon became sober, and many of those in Bethania were so sorry for their separation from me, their former pastor, that they rather joined *my* congregation. Also the visit of preacher Herlitz from Melbourne, who believed himself called, to help the afflicted Lutheran "Church" of Queensland,—but instead helped her to greater disunion (cfr. the two synods!), since the newly arrived Sueltmann from Hanover opposed him and Schirmeister in Brisbane—made no impression upon me or my congregation. They now agreed with me that they wanted to have nothing to do with *such* synods. It is true I permitted this gentleman from Melbourne to deliver a sermon in my church, but that was all. As "Superintendent" of the Lutheran "Church" in Queensland, as which he offered himself to us, half in earnest, half jokingly, nobody wanted him, at least not the real (?) Lutherans, since under the name of "Lutheran" he was nevertheless "United," i. e. indifferent in creed. This visit, as well as Suel-

manns' arrival in Bethania, were the last ripples which reminded us of the disturbances and storms of the last years. Otherwise there was now a great calm, so that in the time following I could often pray in my sylvan solitude with the Psalmist: "A hymn, O God, becometh thee in Sion!"

This tranquil peace, however, which now extended over my whole congregation, was due to the fact that, after all my enemies had been defeated, my "ministry" in this congregation had become an *authority*, which however, I first had to acquire in desperate struggles within and without. Now I indeed had peace within and without. The "ecclesiastical brothers" had to look at my congregation from without, for the fold of the herd was firmly closed against them, and properly speaking, there were no "bellwethers" therein. So the "Shepherd" was able to walk before his sheep unhindered. This I also did with the help of God. It was my special aim to celebrate the divine services pompously, and to adorn the church beautifully. Whilst my successor in Bethania had nothing speedier to do than to *abolish* the Liturgy, which I had introduced there with much trouble, here in Philadelphia the ceremonies of Loche's Agenda were used which was indeed arranged beautifully *after Catholic model*. There a Catholic would have heard the same melody at the Preface and Pater Noster as in his church; also the psalms and the Magnificat were sung in honor of God and His holy Mother. Among other holy pictures a beautiful picture of the Blessed Virgin also adorned the church.\* At solemn services four to six candles burnt

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\* NOTE—Afterwards, when I visited this church again from Charter's Towers, the picture of the Blessed Virgin had disappeared. I found it at last, like old rubbish, in a corner of the sacristy. My successor, indignant at this "Catholic idolatry", had assigned this place of honor to it. Another proof, how much the Lutherans disregard the Mother of the Saviour. I suppose this disregard belongs to their "pure doctrine"!

upon the altar, which just according to the seasons of the ecclesiastical year was decorated with the respective liturgical colors, as in like manner also the beautiful Gothic granite baptismal font. From the following "Missionary-report" of an ecclesiastical paper from the year 1884 regarding a "missionary feast" held in my congregation, which on account of the sad state of affairs, I celebrated all alone—without "colleagues"—but nevertheless in peaceful tranquillity, the reader can form an idea as to the manner of the divine service in my congregation.

*"Mission feast of St. John's Congregation at Philadelphia near Beenleigh in Queensland, May 7, 1884."*  
 "For eight long days it had rained almost incessantly, and also on the morning of this same day, on which St. John's Congregation was to celebrate its annual mission festival, the sun looked rather gloomily through the clouds. Towards eight o'clock, however, the weather became fair, and, by and by, one vehicle after the other arrived, packed with people, so that at the beginning of the services at half past nine the church was crowded. We are again living in the great joyful season of the Church, the holy forty days between Easter and Ascension. Therefore this mission festival was indeed a joyful one. Everything excited joy over the kingdom of God. The altar and the pulpit were adorned with a red silk altar veil, and on the former six candles were burning, shining forth among scented flowers and fragrant wreaths, wherewith innocent girls had adorned it. Service began with the hymn: "O Jesu Christe wahres Licht" (Jesus Christ true Light); and confessing we first of all bent our knees, so that freed from the burden of our sins we could celebrate this feast joyously. Then we sang Psalm 87, and in the "Kyrie Eleison" we

brought our need, and especially that of the heathen before the Lord. In the Gloria our joyous thoughts first received full expression, for mission festivals are celebrated for the honor of God. Then came the singing of the collect and the reading of the Epistle, Rom. 3, 23-31, to which the congregation answered with a joyous Alleluja. After the main song "Wach auf, du Geist der ersten Zeugen" (Wake up, Spirit of the first witnesses), the local pastor read as Gospel Is. 2, 1-5, and then intoned the Credo. The sermon, delivered by the pastor of the place, in connection with St. Matth. 28, 16-20, encouraged the congregation *to the good work of a holy mission* and answered the two questions: 1. Why, and 2. How should we carry on a mission. To the first question a threefold answer was given: a. The Lord wants it, b. The misery of the heathen requires it, c. The coming of the Lord is hastened by it (v. St. Matth. 24, 14). The answer to the second question showed: We should carry on a mission: (a) With a living faith and the knowledge: I have received mercy! (b) We should prove this faith by mercy and love, by praying and giving alms for the poor heathen. To give the sermon in detail, would require too much space: therefore, only these points. A prayer, said kneeling at the altar, for the coming of the kingdom of God to the heathen, with Benedicamus and blessing, ended the services in the forenoon. In the afternoon at half past two o'clock the bell once more called the congregation and the guests into the church. Services as in the forenoon were held according to the excellent liturgy of Loehe, but now as Vespers, which began with an invocation of the divine assistance in our prayer (sung antiphonatim), singing of a psalm (Ps. 97), a lesson (Is. 52) and a hymn. Then again, as in the morning, the local pastor mount-

ed the pulpit. After an introductory prayer, in which we especially thanked the Lord, for having sent missionaries to preach the Gospel to our old German forefathers, as also for the blessing of the pure Gospel and the Sacraments in our midst;—the pastor read Ps. 118, 1: “Give praise to the Lord, for he is good: for his mercy endureth forever,” and in order to awaken in us true gratitude for the Gospel, he related to us in connection with this text the founding of the Church in the German fatherland by Boniface, the Apostle of the Germans. The congregation attentively followed the speaker to the end. After having bent our knees once more before the Lord, and having commended to Him the cause of His Kingdom, this so beautiful and blessed celebration of the mission came to a close.—It must be mentioned that a mission offering was made to the Lord, which amounted to the sum of 7 Lbs. os. 11d. —Similar “mission festivals” were held by me in Bethania once every year, and upon my invitation a great number of ministers were generally present at the same. Then they had an opportunity to wonder at the “Catholic Liturgy,” which, however, seemed to please them by and by, since one or the other introduced at least *something* of it in his congregation—of course only that which he thought good. Thus for instance, “old Schirmeister.” Sometimes he also preached at these mission festivals. Once after a sermon he read some statistics, in which it seemed strange to me and also to my wife—if to others, I do not know—that, after having named the number of Protestants, Jews, and heathen, he added after a short pause: “and so *many* are still Catholics!” So with him the Catholics came *after* the heathen. (!) This perhaps should be at least an indirect request to my congregation, also to contribute to the *Protestant Mis-*

*sion among Catholics.* With *such* missionary *fanaticism* I was disgusted. Once before I received an invitation by mail from St. Louis, Mo., to assist in the "Evangelization"—i. e. Protestantization, or which is the same: final Unchristianization—of Spain. (!) However, I refused, saying that errors enough prevailed, not only among the uncivilized heathen, but also manifest unbelief enough among civilized *Protestants* with whom to try the missionary art. I was very *indignant* at the demand that I should aid in urging the Catholics of Spain into Protestantism and its confusion. For, although everything worked in good order in my own congregations, I always had this confusion before my eyes. The evidently impenitent, deeply fallen N. had no rest, until he with about eleven others—of which, however, only about *three* had belonged to my parish—had "cut himself loose from my pastoral care," and in this manner had collected a small number, whose minister or prelector he was himself at first, but afterwards my successor Sueltmann in Bethania. My old "friend" Hausmann had also built a church in Beenleigh, when upon my arrival at Philadelphia the majority of his small congregation, professing to belong to the Lutheran "Church," had left him and joined my parish. Thus the little town of Beenleigh was "blessed" with *two* (bitterly opposing) Lutheran churches, which, however, were frequented very little, since even people, who lived in Beenleigh, passed Hausmann's and Noethling's opposition-church, and came to mine at Philadelphia. A young man had also joined the just mentioned opposition-church, as it seemed in order to take revenge on me, because I would not propose him to my congregation at Philadelphia as teacher, since the teacher who was there would thereby lose his position.

After having sufficiently helped agitating and stirring up my parish, he went to Germany, in order to—"study" at Hermannsburg (he had a wife and children). Even after having had the audacity to go to my father and to slander me, he was accepted by the Mission House (although I and my trustees had sent a complaint against him to Rev. Harms) immediately: (i. e. without requiring of him in any manner an acknowledgment and contrite confession of his wrong) "since he studied at his own expense" as Harms wrote to me. After two years he was trained for a minister, although lacking the necessary common education—and having returned to Queensland he was then "ordained" a Lutheran minister by Rev. Hellmuth, *his father-in-law*. He would have preferred to settle down in *my* parishes—but, as he did not succeed in this, and no other position being vacant, he became minister at Maryborough with his father-in-law, my predecessor at Bethania, and the latter could now apply his time entirely to "doctoring!" In this manner they *both* were cared for: the *father-in-law* and the *son-in-law*. (!)—

Thus I could lead an ideal life of quietude at Philadelphia with my small family. In Bethania God had given us a daughter and a son. My eldest son, Martin, had already been born in America, the second, also born in America, had died four weeks after our arrival in Australia, at the tender age of one year. My eldest daughter was born Feb. 17, 1880, even the same day on which a year before we had left San Francisco. On that day I had a funeral, and after having delivered a funeral sermon on St. John 13, 7: "What I do thou knowest not now; but thou shalt know hereafter," I received the joyous news upon entering the house that in the meantime a daughter was born to us. With

the rain pouring down in torrents, she was carried over into the church, and there, like most of my children, was baptized by me, and received the name Clara. When a year and a half later on the feast of the Exaltation of the Cross (Sept 14), 1881, God gave us another son, he received the name Constantine. Here at Philadelphia God gave us five more children, three boys and two girls\*; but two of these boys He soon took away. They all three rest in the cemetery at Bethania. Two beautiful crosses were erected at their graves. The second—of sandstone—besides another inscription carries the Catholic prayer for the dead: "Requiescant in pace!" The first, of marble, had besides the name, etc., only the word: "Hosanna!" as inscription. It was, however, *broken* in a rather rude way. At a wedding in the church a young Protestant thought it proper to lead his horse into the cemetery, and there to tie it to the cross at the grave of my child. The horse, however, seemed to know better than its master that it did not belong there—it tore itself loose, at the same time tearing the cross over, which broke in two. Another example, how little the cemetery and the sign of the holy cross is held sacred by many Protestants, although not all really go *so far* that they, as it happened in Berlin, place an inscription like the following above the entrance of the cemetery: "Macht hier das Leben gut und schoen, Kein Jenseits gibt's, kein Wieder-sehn!" (Make life pleasant and easy here, there's no beyond, no meeting there!) To me the sign of the cross was always dear and sacred, and nothing, I would like to say, *disgusted* me more, than a cemetery with tiresome broken off monoliths and Jewish monu-

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\* Elfrida, died Feb. 23, 1898 at the age of 11 years; Hildegard, died Dec. 21, 1902, at the age of 15 years; both at St. Paul, Minn.

ments. Therefore, I tried to implant in the hearts of the school-children a love for this holy sign, and my "confirmandi" were accustomed to make the sign of the holy cross before and after instructions, which however, aroused the anger of Schneider, in Bethania, although his mother was Catholic, as he did not want his children to become cranks. But during my present activity in Philadelphia no one dared to say anything against it. For in this I could appeal to Luther, who gives the following instructions for morning and evening-prayers: "Thou shalt *bless thyself with the sign of the holy cross* and say," etc. But where is this done to-day? Really a person would make himself *conspicuous* among the Lutherans nowadays, if he still were to make this sign, and would be taken for a Catholic, which with them is worse than anything else. I, however, as well as my wife, did not mind this, since we were wont to make the sign of the cross in our private devotions, held in common with our children, as also before and after meals. Once, however, when my wife and the wife of Rev. Giezendanner, of Towoomba, were staying over night at Schirmeister's in Brisbane, she saw to her surprise that not only she herself and our hired girl, who had learned it from me in instruction, but that also Mrs. Giezendanner made the sign of the cross, as she was saying her night prayers. However, she was indeed, as I have said, the Catholic wife of the Lutheran minister Giezendanner, who was an apostatized Catholic. We also had a crucifix hanging in several of our rooms, and pictures of the Sacred Heart of Jesus and that of Mary adorned our parlor. Thus also at church dedications\* in many instances I took the op-

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\* NOTE—It was also customary in my parish, according to Catholic type, to bless the houses with prayer and an address—also upon request, newly erected sugar mills; and at such occasions I always had a good opportunity to look after the spiritual wants at the respective home.

portunity to present a crucifix to the new church. At weddings I sometimes gave a crucifix as a wedding-present. The Catholic book-store in Brisbane, therefore, had a good trade with me in the line of crucifixes. And otherwise, whenever I was on business in Brisbane, often in company of my eldest son, Martin, I generally did not fail to go into the beautiful Cathedral for a few moments, in order to pray there kneeling, and at the same time to take a little rest. Naturally, I had to be very *cautious* in doing so; for, had I been seen, I would have come still more into "Catholic odor."

When on Nov. 10, 1883, as is known, the four-hundredth anniversary of Luther's birth was celebrated throughout the German Empire, as also abroad in foreign countries, I could no longer feel enthusiastic about Luther's Church, especially *after the newly made sad experiences* in Bethania, and whilst throughout Germany the Protestants of the different shades, beginning with the sincerely believing Lutherans down to those denying the divinity of Christ, celebrated this day with great rumble, to me it seemed on this day, as if I could weep and mourn with Jeremias over the dissensions and the ruin of my "Church." Therefore I did not celebrate this day at all, and Nov. 11, which was a Sunday, was quietly celebrated as a day of penance and of prayer. And how could I exult—in the face of the terrible desolation and the continual discord among the Lutherans, not only in Australia, but also in Germany, as well as in the United States, as mentioned by the newspaper again and again! I especially liked to read the Lutheran paper "*Unter dem Kreuze*" (Under the cross)—edited by Ludwig Grote, an Hanoverian, who had been exiled on account of his adherence

to the Welfic house, and who was now living in Basle as a "resigned minister"—because it always sincerely told the truth, unflinchingly and without seeking the favor of men. Of especial interest to me were the differences within the so-called "Lutheran Free-Church" of Hanover, which were related in it. The once flourishing congregation at Hermannsburg, where Rev. Ludwig Harms—living in celibacy—had once accomplished so much for the Lutheran Mission, had split into three parts. When it came to a separation from the established church of the State, the first party had clung to it, and received as minister of the established church the Rev. Ehlers; the second party, however, with its minister, Theodore Harms, constituted an "independent congregation" and had a church of its own. This congregation now—(and this caused the scandal)—was soon *split again*, thereby causing a separation from the separation! Rev. Drewes, with whom I became acquainted in San Francisco, had been appointed to this new congregation; but E. Harms, the son of Rev. Theodore Harms, opposed Rev. Drewes, especially because he sided with the Hessian ministers, who had joined the "Free-Church" of Hanover, holding the doctrine of "church and ministry" (according to Vilmar), in contradiction to the "Missourians." E. Harms, not being ordained yet, and not minding his own synod, had himself ordained by a minister of the "Emanuel-synod." (By the way, this synod thereby practically did due honor to its independistic theories!) Thus he snatched a small heap, on the plea that he would free these poor people from the errors of Vilmar—and since that time there are three so-called Lutheran congregations at Hermannsburg, who oppose each other. In his paper (Kreuzblatt) Grote decidedly spoke against such doings. For my part I was so

*pleased* over his attitude, that I wrote him an encouraging letter on this account, which he partly published in his paper (No. 44, 1886) as follows:

“FROM QUEENSLAND IN AUSTRALIA.”

“I am in receipt of a letter, from which I take the following passage: ‘Our ecclesiastical conditions almost seem to be unknown in Germany. But the latest occurrences in the Free-Church of Hanover are much similar to those, which here, so to say, are a daily occurrence. Independentism hardly spreads so much anywhere, as just there, where our Lutheran Church has disentangled herself from the embrace of the State and acquired an independent position. Just there and then it is to be deplored that we veer from extreme to extreme, and thus the disorder only becomes the greater. The independent party certainly will not repair the damage—they are mere quacks. Therefore, dear colleague, stand firmly upon the rock of the acknowledged truth, and continue upon the taken road! The Lord will be with you.’

This encouragement from distant Australia is very gratifying and consoling to me. For the voice, which confirms me in my religious views, speaks from experience, although from very sad experience, which my dear colleague has made in Australia, where these conditions are “a daily occurrence.” 1. Independentism cannot repair the damage; it only causes greater confusion. Is this not the same experience, which we also have had in Germany, and which was especially confirmed by the sad occurrences at Hermannsburg in such a striking manner? No, not in this manner will the Lutheran Church be organized, as much as that independent fanatic may dream of a “continental church” and a “continental pastor.” 2. Independentism hard-

ly spreads so much anywhere as just there, where our Lutheran Church has disentangled herself from the embrace of the State and acquired an independent position. Also this is an old experience. When was the abuse of evangelical freedom greater than at the time of the Reformation? Those, who formerly submitted to the most violent enslavement by the State, think, as soon as they have shaken off this slavish yoke, they must fall into the other extreme of unrestrainedness. For they pronounce every one, who upholds ecclesiastical laws and esteems them just as highly as religious freedom, a 'Lutheran Romanist,' a 'papistical heretic.' But this is not all. Even those, who have not shaken off the slavish yoke of the established church, but who submit to more than papal despotism at the hands of the authorities of the established church, generally place themselves and their academical investigations, with which they mix themselves into the controversies of the Free-Churches, on the side of Independentism. Practically allowing themselves to be enslaved, theoretically they preach the most desperate unrestrainedness; so that a person could entertain the idea, that they purposely try to increase the confusion of the Free Church, and thereby to undermine the same. Now, we do not wish to accuse them of this bad intention. But so much the more do we deplore the fact, that their eyes are thus blinded, and we agree with our dear colleague in Australia: 'They are mere quacks.'

L. GROTE."

In the next number then appeared a short article written by me: "Entire Independentism"—I could just as well have written: "Entire Protestantism"—"composed of contradictions"

## “ENTIRE INDEPENDENTISM COMPOSED OF CONTRADICTIONS.”

“Practically illustrated by an example.”

“On Aug. 4, of this year the ‘United Synod of the German and Scandinavian Lutheran Church’ held its annual meeting at the Scandinavian church in Brisbane. Although the writer of these lines, was placed in a solitary position three years ago, when there was as yet no Lutheran synod in Queensland, through the machinations of the dear colleagues, since by their intrigues, I was driven away from my parish in Bethania and had to clear the parsonage for Pastor Sueltmann from Hanover, nevertheless, I took the liberty to attend the same as an uninvited guest. Thus I had the opportunity to see the above sentence from the “Kreuzblatt” (No. 28 of this year), practically illustrated by an example.

The matter in question was the separation of two congregations from the named synod. This separation received a very dubious character thereby, that members of the same maintained, that they had never belonged to this synod. At any rate they did not want to have anything to do with the synod, for what reasons, cannot be explained here, and did not want to enter upon any negotiations with Pastor Sueltmann, as Superintendent of the synod. For this reason they were now most severely condemned as such congregations, that deserved to be excommunicated; for they had opposed the synod as an ecclesiastical authority. After Pastor Sueltmann had brought about their public condemnation, he introduced the “Hermannsburg separation from the separation” and next in order had the “Public Declaration” of Pastor Ehlers in Hermannsburg read to the meeting. This, however, was

done so fast and indistinctly that the majority of those present (mostly laymen) could not understand what it was really about, and thereupon not giving the opposite party an opportunity to speak—I mean the “Hessian ministers”—Pastor Suelmann had the motion passed, to send the “fighting brothers”\* in Hermannsburg a synodal *resolution of approval*, to console and encourage them.

Now, I ask every impartial person: Is not such a manner of action an enormous contradiction? On account of their pretended separation from above named synod, these two congregations in Queensland are condemned by the chairman, in the severest terms; on the other hand he bestows the highest praise and the greatest acknowledgment upon the Hermannsburg brothers, instead of admonishing them *to be peaceful*. Is this not a *practical* proof how “the entire Independentism is composed of mere contradictions?”

MARTIN EBERHARD,  
Lutheran Minister in Philadelphia,  
near Beenleigh in Queensland.

In all this Lutheran confusion it was often still a consolation to me what Kliefoth said in 1882, on the occasion of the “General Lutheran Conference” at Schwerin in Mecklenburg—and THESE in their manner really GOLDEN WORDS *have helped* me to seek the true Church later on, and by God’s grace to find it there, where but alone these words are taken *seriously*. In that address Kliefoth, the head of the “high-consistory” describes the condition of the Lutheran Church “in short thus: This is our condition—within ourselves powers of decomposition,” (as such were considered: the Evangelical Alliance which puts aside

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\* NOTE—I. e., to those who had opposed their lawful synod.

every profession of faith; the Union which wishes to class the Lutheran with the Reformed Profession; the high-political construction of a National Church, and the Protestant Confederation with the Free-Congregational Sects;—why he did not also add the “Evangelical Bund” (Evangelical Association), has not become clear to me, perhaps because it can help as ally “against Rome,” although composed of cut and long tail, believers and unbelievers of every shade, and held together by their “hatred against Rome”—and around us“—continues Kliefoth—” a *powerful, aspiring Roman Church* (sic!), which awaits our decomposition; that is the condition of our Lutheran Church.” Although the speaker expressly defended himself against the suspicion, “as if what he said was inspired by the pallid *fear of destruction*,” still at the acknowledgment of the “powerful, aspiring Roman Church,” I could not refrain from thinking how miserably on the other hand *by their own fault* the Lutheran State and Free Churches pine away to their final destruction, in spite of all the pretty sayings about “Profession of Faith” and: “as long as we adhere to it, we ourselves will remain.” But where did they really adhere to this Profession? And who is to decide whether they adhered to it or not? After having given utterance to the necessity of “preserving the Profession of the Lutheran Church,” he therefore continues:

“That is certainly the first and the last, but not at all everything, or more correctly said: this first leads *per se* to a second. Correct and pure Doctrine, true Word and Sacrament, genuine Profession—these are inalienably necessary things, but they cannot float in the air, and in the air they shall not float. Very short sighted are those who speak in this manner: ‘As

long as they only leave us the liberty to preach God's Word sincerely and truly according to our Profession, so long it is well, everything else is superfluous, and this they may destroy and dash to pieces. It is true, the Christian Church has but one task (?) : that she spread the salutary Truth the world over by *preaching* (sic!) and professing the same. But should the Church disseminate her Profession, *she must gain a foothold in the world*; although not being of the world, she must, nevertheless, obtain a firm footing in the world, and this is done by organizing INSTITUTIONS in her historical life, in accordance with her Profession, by which she with her doctrine and works finds the firm footing and support in the historical life of the nations. And shall the Church preach, she certainly should not only preach with words, for such INSTITUTIONS, having sprung from the Profession of the Church and preserved by it, verily also preach, yes they preach to the nations, they preach to generations, they also instruct in that which they preach. And shall the Church work in and about the world, the work of individuals must become mutual work, and that is obtained by organization of the work. *Without organization no strength; no support; no success of religious work, and without institutions no constancy, no permanency of the historical life of the Church upon the current of time.* This the Christian Church has at all times known, and has ever been industrious to organize institutions in accordance with her doctrine, to maintain their existence and essence and, where in the progress of centuries new labors have arisen, also to provide for new organizations. Thus the Christian Church has done at all times; thus also has our Lutheran Church done, as her ancient rit-

ual proves to the student; and thus also we must do, in order to continue existing."

But how do these words agree with the Confession of Augsburg, Art. 7: "And unto true unity of the Church, it is *sufficient* to agree concerning the doctrine of the Gospel and the administration of the Sacraments?"—AT LAST *the Lutherans come to the knowledge that this is NOT sufficient*—for the unity of the Church—yes, *that it is BY NO MEANS POSSIBLE to retain* "pure Gospel and Sacrament" without "organization," which protects and defends the "institutions" established in the Church. The true Church *has* received its organization from the Lord of the Church himself; and does not need to seek laboriously new institutions. I believe that this is the point in which believing Protestants should meet Catholics; and the former will no longer need to sigh for organizations and new institutions—in the confusion of Protestant Babel—, but on the other hand, finding everything necessary for the salvation and subsistence of Christianity in the one true Catholic Church, they would, at last rejoicing in ecclesiastical unity, extend hands to each other again with the beautiful greeting: Jesus Christ be praised—forever! Amen.

But, alas, I did not think for the moment that the Lutherans are only too much accustomed to console themselves with lofty expressions, but at the same time never advance to DEEDS. By chance, as it were, I got hold of a Catholic book: "Vertrauliche Unterhaltungen ueber den heutigen Protestantismus. Von Abbe Segur" (Familiar chats on Protestantism of today. By Abbe Segur). This book is written for Catholics in defense of Protestant attacks, but by the convicting truth of its proofs it did not fail—in spite of its acerbity—to make a lasting impression upon me.

Since then I was occupied with the careful perusal of the Catholic catechism in my solitude among the high eucalyptus-trees, which surrounded our house, and once more thoroughly studied the book by Weninger, "Die Unfehlbarkeit des Papstes" (The Infallibility of the Pope). But my conviction was as yet not strong enough, to overcome with might and main the all confronting obstacles and become Catholic.

In general everything now went on peacefully and christianly in my congregations. And if, unfortunately, some grave offences occurred by which public scandal was given, my congregations, nevertheless, agreed with me that for public sinners as a matter of course resource had to be taken to *church-discipline*. It was exercised in this manner: The penitents knelt down before the altar and there, after having answered the respective questions, made their confession, and were then—certainly not validly—"absolved." However, I know that this penance publicly performed in church was frequently not without blessings. In one case, I remember, when I had chosen as text for my address the passage: "Wherefore he that thinketh himself to stand, let him take heed lest he fall," and asked all those present *also* to do penance with the fallen ones, instead of pharisaically condemning them, the impression was especially great and many a tear was shed.

But there are times when God himself exercises church-discipline among his people. So He did in the beginning of the year 1887, in my parishes, which were in a truly *flourishing* condition also in regard to temporal affairs.

"Alas! for never mortal state  
Can form perpetual truce with Fate!  
Swift are the steps of Woe."

Suddenly, in the dark of night, my people were awakened by violent knocking at the doors. The waters of the Logan and Albert rivers, which in consequence of the heavy rains had overflowed their banks, were now forcing their entrance—unannounced and unwelcome guests—into the homes of my parishioners. Since it is not my task to give a detailed description of that flood, I shall only state that the devastations caused by the flood were so enormous that many people lost all their property, and some even their lives. The greatest destruction had been wrought by the flood in my parish at Elkana. It was good indeed, that the new church there had been finished shortly before the flood! For, whilst the old “slab” church was situated low, the new one had been erected on an elevation, so that many people were able to find shelter in it, since their dwellings stood under water, or were destroyed. In Philadelphia, my place of residence, more than forty people came to seek shelter in the high situated church and parsonage. For several days these forty people here found shelter and nourishment for body and soul. Although the church had in part been changed into a dormitory, it was a pleasure for me, to hold divine services in common in the morning—something unusual for Lutherans. But how beautiful, *thus* to begin the day! How beautiful therefore the order of the Catholic Church to consecrate each day of the year with holy Mass, and to offer up the sublime Sacrifice of the New Testament in every quarter of the globe, from the rising to the setting of the sun, in fulfilment of Mal. I, 11: “For from the rising of the sun even to the going down, my name is great among the Gentiles, and in every place there is sacrifice, and there is offered to my name a clean oblation: for my name is great among the Gentiles, saith the Lord of

Hosts." By sacrifice the Protestants as a rule—they still have a sensible idea of it—understand the spiritual sacrifice of prayer and the like, but at the same time overlook the fact that, since in the preceding verse mention is made of the sacrifices of the Old Testament, also an *exterior and real sacrifice* can only be meant in the verse just quoted. And since it is expressly called a "*clean oblation of food*" in the original text, the sacrifice of prayer and good works, often stained with sin, can by no means be meant thereby, and we can only understand it to be the unbloody Sacrifice of the New Testament, the precious body and blood of Christ in the eucharistic sacrifice, which at the same time is taken as nourishment. Truly, the Catholic Church is the city on the mountain, the ark of Noah, to which the nations hasten, seeking shelter and salvation from the deluge of perdition!—Frequently, it is true, this condition *dawned* upon me, but the Lord first had to lead me thus that outwardly, so to say, he had to place the Catholic Church in front of my door, before I found the entire truth!—

In the year 1887, the old minister Schirmeister died in Brisbane, after having endured for thirty long years the confusion of Protestantism. He died believing in Jesus, the Son of God, his Savior, after having also begged my pardon a few months previous to his death for the wrong he had done in my congregations. Otherwise he had shown me much affection, and had done me and my family many a favor; and I had also returned this affection. So much the more it therefore grieved me, when he became guilty of such an arbitrary encroachment upon my parish. The past shall be forgotten; here I have only mentioned it *for the sake of the fact itself*. Requiescat in pace et

lux perpetua luceat ei!—Moreover, a beautiful monument adorns his last resting-place, at the unveiling of which a celebration took place, for which I had worked out the liturgical order upon request. In my address on I. Cor. 13, 8: “Charity never falleth away” I laid stress upon the communion of Saints here and there, who by the ties of love to Christ, although bodily divided by death, forever remain joined to each other by mutual intercession—and concluded with a prayer for the repose of the soul of the deceased. It must be remarked that—as much as I know—no one of those present took offence at this.

Thus the parish at Brisbane had, therefore, become vacant, and now the matter in question was the appointment of a successor. Old Schirmeister had, however, during his last illness made provisions in a sort of “last will and testament” that the congregation should call a minister from *Germany*. (According to that it seemed, as if none of us ministers in Queensland were worthy of becoming his successor; nevertheless, I and another were “permitted” to help out during the vacancy.) Notwithstanding the best offers, they could not get a minister from there. Then they applied to the United States. But also from here they received a refusal. What was to be done? Heiner, “President” of the synod to which the parish at Brisbane belonged (the other synod had chosen as “Superintendent” my successor at Bethania, Sueltmann by name), the same who had delivered that “beautiful wedding sermon,” was evidently in a dilemma; he certainly would have preferred to become the successor of old Schirmeister; but he could not very well propose himself. He therefore proposed Langenbecker of Toowoomba; but his parish would not let him go. Finally the congregation at Brisbane acted “independently,”

and, not paying any further attention to the synod, held an election, for which minister Maier and my humble self were proposed. Since there was only a small number of parishioners present, Maier, minister at Charters Towers,—who, in order to get the position had stirred heaven and earth: telegrams, letters, friends—finally succeeded in getting elected by a majority of one or two votes. He had already given up all hopes for the position—now his joy was great! In Charters Towers he certainly had a good, paying position (250 Lbs. \$1,250.00), but as minister in Brisbane he was more respected. I must admit that at that time I myself would have gladly gone to Brisbane—to the city, on account of the education of my children. But such chasing, intriguing, and persuading the people, as was done by Maier, I loathed with all my soul, and deemed it “unworthy of a Lutheran minister.” At present I am of a different opinion. Not that I am sorry not to have also employed unworthy means, in order to gain the position; no, but I mean, such doings are just among the Lutherans entirely in place, since among them “church-government” is only of human law, yes, each parish, as we have seen, is the “supreme court,” and can thus choose a minister entirely at will. One distinctly sees from this story of the appointment-of-a-successor-for-the-parish, what the results necessarily must be, if there is no ecclesiastical authority *jure divino*, which not only prevents all disorder at the filling of a position, but also makes provisions that the vacant parish receives a new pastor *as soon as possible*. For in consequence of all this wire pulling the parish at Brisbane had to be without a minister of its own for about a year.

As I said, I had the education of my children very much at heart. For this reason I had in the year 1885

(June 4) sent my eldest son, Martin, then only eight years of age, a bright and talented boy, to his grandfather in Germany in the company of an old, reliable, acquaintance, so he would not be obliged to attend an unreligious "Grammar School," but, educated at a Christian gymnasium, might one day become an able minister. This step, however, after the example of the Lutheran missionaries in India, we have since then repented a thousand times!—Our eldest daughter Clara also stood in need of a good English school, as also the rest of the children. Therefore, in order to get to the city *for the sake of my children*, I applied for the parish at Charters Towers, which had now become vacant, and obtained the position. We were glad to go there, not being deterred by the peculiar "Agreement" sent us by that congregation, according to which the new relation was to rest upon a three months' mutual *notice*, because my predecessor had left it so suddenly and had gone to Brisbane. For we argued, even if mention of a "notice" had not expressly been made in the "call," it would *not change matters* since each parish can do whatever it will. If, therefore, it is no longer satisfied with its minister, it can *without* a previously stipulated notice—as did my parish in Bethania—drive away or "depose" him. So I *took my chances*.—When I informed my congregation at Philadelphia thereof, I was sorry myself, and I had hardly believed that the congregation loved me *so much*. Some wept at my departure, others begged me to stay, others again scolded. However, I knew that this was God's will and way with me, who wanted to lead me "very near to Him" and to His true Church.

“Or if on joyful wing  
Cleaving the sky,  
Sun, moon, and stars forgot,  
Upward I fly;  
Still all my song shall be,  
Nearer, my God, to Thee,  
Nearer, my God, to Thee,  
Nearer to Thee!”

Thus we could soon sing again upon the waters of the Pacific Ocean, just as once before—nine years ago.



## CHAPTER XII.

MY DEPARTURE FOR CHARTERS TOWERS, MY ACTIVITY THERE, MY APPROACH AND RELATION TO THE CATHOLIC CHURCH, AND RESIGNATION OF MY "MINISTRY."

SO then we were going North, not into the cold; but into the heat—into the tropical climate of Northern Queensland, where under the 20th degree S. lat. the Gold City Charters Towers with its 12,000 inhabitants is situated, perhaps 1,000 feet above the level of the sea, in majestic solitude, surrounded by immense prairies, where the cactus, the aloe, and the fern grow exuberantly, and the lofty eucalyptus stretches its branches heavenward. In order to get there, we had to go by (way of the) sea, passing Rockhampton and Bowen, to Townsville. Of Rockhampton, which city is the key to the famous Mount Morgan gold-field, we saw nothing, since the large steamships must on account of the low water anchor at a distance of twenty miles. Bowen, however, with its safe and beautiful harbor, crowned with a chain of verdant mountains, charmingly lay before us one beautiful morning in the glittering rays of the morning-sun, as if conveyed there by magic. About eight hours later we landed in Cleveland Bay, being taken ashore by a smaller boat, and were met at Townsville by Mr. Riedrich, trustee in my new parish. After we had taken a rest in one of the beautiful and comfortable hotels there, we left by train on the following day for our new

home (82 miles south-west of Townsville). Whilst we were on the water, we hardly noticed that we were now in the tropics, since we were constantly fanned by a cool refreshing sea-breeze. Closed up in a narrow car with many other passengers, however, we suffered greatly from the intense heat. But Mr. Riedrich kindly brought us some refreshing lemonade at one of the stations. After having crossed the Burdekin River near Macrossan Bridge, the train took us up higher and higher—across the Range—and there Charters Towers, our new home, now lay before us. It was about five o'clock in the afternoon, when we arrived at the railway-station in Charters Towers. A number of parishioners had gathered upon the platform, and one of them read an address of welcome. Then we drove to Mueller's Hotel, where we staid until our baggage had arrived, and we were again settled. Since the parish had not been in existence very long, it had only recently provided for a parsonage of its own, which, however, although roomy, was old and low, so that, already when moving into it, we had to suffer intensely from the burning heat. Therefore the first thing which I bought there—was a *water-bag*. According to Queensland custom it is used for the keeping of drinking-water, which remained cool and fresh in it, for in general the people there only have rain water, as not every one is able to have an artesian well. We felt the heat so much the more, as our dwelling was situated rather low on the slope of a hill next to the church. The latter was a high and handsome edifice, built in the Gothic style with a tower aside of it in which hung two large beautiful bells, and it was quite a contrast to the small Catholic convent, which, standing on the opposite side of the street, was poorly built of wood, and in its *outer appearance* only displayed

apostolic *poverty*. In the beginning I hardly imagined how beautiful it was *inside*, nor what graces were to flow forth from there, and of what great significance this small quiet convent was yet to become to *me*. At all events it was pleasing to me, for once to live in the immediate neighborhood of a Catholic convent; for thus I had the best opportunity—we could view the entire convent-yard—to observe the life of these Catholic nuns, who belonged to the order of the Sisters of Mercy.

Although my church here was the largest and most beautiful in the city, and my income also enabled me to make a good livelihood, I, nevertheless, had a very small congregation, since there were but few Germans in the place, which circumstances, however, only made the *position very comfortable* and pleasant. In all probability a Lutheran parish would never have been founded here, had not a Mr. Paradies been in the possession of too much money, from whose superabundance this church sprung forth. After its completion he himself was no longer able to enter it very often, since the misuse of mammon had delivered him over to a premature death. Upon closer acquaintance with the congregation I soon made the sad discovery that a “master of the lodge” of the Freemasons also wanted to be the master in the church, and to domineer over pastor and congregation. Also Odd Fellows and Orangemen (which latter especially *hate* the Catholic Church) were represented and came to Lutheran communion. There was only a very small number of quiet souls, thirsty for salvation, but these were poor and generally dependent upon the wealthy.

When visiting the different members of the parish, I was struck with the worldly, unecclesiastical spirit which prevailed in general; but still more was I

struck with the utterance of a young man (whom I kindly admonished): "Sin we *must*, as long as we are here!"—(Luther in a letter to Melancthon in 1521.) I *was surprised* at this "Lutheran wisdom," which he had remembered so well—and certainly also acted accordingly. For the "sinning" in this parish was so general that the gravest sins were a common affair, for which certainly not so much these poor people were to be made responsible, as Luther with his: "Sin we *must*," as whose docile scholars they only acted. I must confess, this utterance from a member of the parish was so *striking* to me that at once the horrible consequence of that sentence confronted me in an appalling manner. For I saw from him, and soon also from the whole congregation, how the people unfearingly carried out in practice this sinning-theory: "Sin we *must*!"—If that is true, what need is there of the admonitions of the minister, yes, why is he necessary at all? Church, divine services, sermon, prayer, sacraments,—everything is useless,—for "sin we *must*!" and for this reason we are at that not responsible to God for our actions, simply because *we can not act differently*.

As comfortable as the position was otherwise, the tropical heat, which in the year 1888 was exceptionally intense there, made it very disagreeable for us, especially in our low house. For the heat at 120 degrees Fahrenheit in the shade was so dreadful in its effects that in consequence thereof thirty to forty persons died within *one* week, many of them *suddenly*. There e. g. a baker suddenly fell from his cart and died on the spot; another stood at the hotel-bar, taking a drink: he toppled over and was a corpse. Since it was unbearable in our house, especially in the afternoon, we only found shelter and refreshment outside in the

shade of the church. But awful it was for me, since during this week I was unable to sleep at night on account of the intense heat, to have to listen during the entire night to the hammering and nailing of *coffins* in a neighboring cabinetmaking-establishment. Distinctly it rumbled over to me again and again: *Memento mori!*—Every one suffered from the intense heat; but we, not accustomed to it as yet, especially suffered in our “mephitic” house. Therefore the congregation agreed upon building a new parsonage; and this time a Mr. Pfeiffer, who was very rich but did not belong to the parish, should help and be asked for the necessary money. For this reason perhaps I had in good time received an introduction to this gentleman, and pleading for my congregation I succeeded in inducing him to help us. Thus it came to the erection of a large and splendid parsonage, which cost 900 Lbs. (\$4,500.00), of which sum the greatest amount was donated by the gentleman named.

In this manner I had become acquainted with Mr. Pfeiffer and soon even befriended, so that I was a frequent guest at his residence. Unfortunately he himself was still an unbelieving Protestant, who had drawn the correct conclusions of the Protestant principle and therefore preferred to be saved “according to his own fashion.” His wife, however, a daughter of the Green Isle, was a Catholic. Once when I was there, she showed me upon my request a beautiful Catholic Bible,—so that from this I could learn what was to be thought of the opinion, spread among Protestants, that Catholics were not allowed to read the Bible. She also lent me her Catholic prayer-book “Garden of the Soul” for inspection. At home I read it over eagerly, and here again I found confirmed what I already knew. During this time I also received the

books which I had ordered when in Philadelphia: The Life of St. Theresa of Jesus—translated into German by Ida Countess Hahn-Hahn, a countrywoman of mine,—and Moehler's "*Symbolik*" (Symbolics). From these two books I derived the greatest advantage. The life of St. Theresa was of assistance to me for my inner life; I read her book with pleasure, especially the first chapters again and again, in quiet, private hours of meditation, and I believe that her intercession has been of assistance to me; Moehler's Symbolics on the other hand showed me, by repeated study, the truth and beauty of the Catholic Church in a clearer and brighter light.—

Although I now had the most beautiful church in the city, and the largest of all Lutheran churches in Queensland; although a very large and splendid parsonage had been built for me and my family with the aid of my friend and patron Pfeiffer, and although at the same time I enjoyed a good income and was able to lead a life of ease,—still I did not by any means feel gratified. Just as the small turret on my church had been bent *aslant* by the wind, thus my conviction of the church of the "true Gospel and Sacrament" now began to get unsettled—and anxious doubts and questions arose within me. O how gladly I would have been a Catholic! Whilst the cross upon the convent opposite my church constantly bore evidence to me of the Crucified, it seemed to me, as if the warped turret on the roof of *my* church continually preached to me of the perverted and wavering opinions of Protestantism, which, also among the Lutherans as a rule, is ashamed to place a cross upon the churches, but on the other hand, as upon my bell-tower in Charters Towers, is not deficient in *weather-vanes*. How *characteristic* that really is! Whilst the Catholic Church holds the Cross

of Christ in high esteem *in every respect*, Protestantism *disregards* it, and rejoices in the weather-vanes of its private opinions, which (especially in politics) it is able to turn according to the weather (only compare its behavior in the "Culturkampf"). This fact alone had *at all times* seemed strange to me: A Catholic Church a person often recognizes by the sign of the holy Cross on its gable; a Protestant Church by the weather-vane planted there instead! Tell me, my dear reader, which of the two thus confesses Christ—the Catholic or the Protestant Church?—I set about to have the slanting turret removed. The trustee as a matter of course was against it, since a cross on top of the church looked "too Catholic,"—only when I referred him to the Church of England in our city, which also had one, and promised that I would defray the expenses myself, he gave his consent, since certainly the crooked "finger" looked too ugly besides. Thus I had a *cross*, wrought of iron, placed upon my church—and we could celebrate "Exaltation of the Cross." But only for a short time was the cross to rest there. One day whilst the parsonage was still unfinished, the other trustee, Mr. Paradies, put in appearance, and gruffly snapped at me: *I* should have the cross taken down from the church! I replied that I certainly had it put up, but never would I have a cross, the symbol of Redemption, *taken down* from a church. If he wanted it removed, he should do it *himself*. Several weeks probably had elapsed, until he had found someone who was bold and unchristian enough to comply with his wish: Down they threw the holy Cross and placed it—into our hen-house. I, however, carried it away from there again, and for the time being set it in my sacristy.—

As for the education of my children, I had at first sent the oldest ones to the "State School," whilst I gave them religious instruction myself, since religious instruction is also barred from the public schools in Australia, and most of the Lutheran parishes have *no* schools of their own; to these also belonged my parish in Charters Towers. But soon, although my children were treated well by the *teachers*, I saw myself obliged, especially on account of the rudeness and vulgarity prevailing in the State School, to send them to the Catholic school. My son, Constantine, because so young, had at first attended the Girls' State School; but soon the teacher explained to me that, since he was such a very bright boy and had progressed so quickly, she could no longer have him there. I should send him to the Boys' School. But because he had as yet not attained the required age, and the Boys' School was overcrowded besides, the teacher declared that he could not admit him. This caused us to let him go to the Catholic Convent School, which at that was attended by many Protestant children, who were not obliged to participate in the religious instruction.\* This, however, was for me and my family *the first actual step towards the Catholic Church*. How my heart throbbed, when later, on one dark evening, I called upon the kind Father Gardland, and asked his permission to send my children to the parochial school! These, however, had in the meantime become well acquainted with the Sisters, having sometimes slipped through an opening in the fence, in order to shake hands with them, when they walked up and down praying in the convent-yard. My eldest daughter

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\* NOTE—There I also learned, what is to be thought of the "Roman proselytism," about which the Protestants rave so much. I myself once commanded my children to be present at the devotional exercises in the morning at the school, but the Sisters sent them out with the remark that as Protestant children they were not to participate in them.

Clara soon went to school to the good Sisters, to whom she took a great liking. Although as Protestants my children were strictly barred from religious instruction, she often went into the church with other girls, and there prayed with pleasure especially before the Blessed Virgin's altar. Then, whenever she left the church, she also—as I had told her to do—moistened her forehead with holy water and made the sign of the holy cross, whereat the other Catholic girls were very much astonished. However, she told them that from her earliest youth she had been taught by her father to make the sign of the cross. One day, on her way home from school, she met some Lutheran girls of my congregation, whom she harmlessly told how beautiful it was in the Catholic Church; one of these Protestant girls said, if she did not know that this statue of the Blessed Virgin was *the goddess* of the Catholics (!!). The next day, however, the Catholic girls could accurately answer my daughter upon her question in this regard, from their catechism: “We adore God alone, Mary, however, whom we honor and love as our mother, to her we pray that she may assist us through her intercession with God.” In the meantime I had once also paid a visit to the Catholic school, and thereby had made the acquaintance of one of the Sisters, Mary Clare. I was present at the religious instruction, she presented me with a catechism, which I gratefully accepted, whereupon I had a short conversation with her on the Catholic religion. She thereby indiscriminately threw the Lutheran creed into the same mould with that of all other Protestants or, as I told her, “into one pot.” In that she was altogether right, but at that time I did not yet understand it; however, the time was to come, when I should be able to understand it entirely. Henceforth I often visited

our neighbors, the good Sisters (Sisters of Mercy), also in their convent, and they always patiently answered my many questions, the answers to which, to my surprise, generally turned out to be entirely different from what I, still prejudiced, had expected them to be. Of especial benefit to me were also the visits, which I, now and then, made in the night-time—similar to Nicodemus—to the good priest, Father Gardland. One night I was shown the church by him, where from the sacristy I attended a lenten devotion with him, held by his assistant. I leaned against a pillar—and the tears of yearning came to my eyes; I would have liked to *go to confession*, and still could not do so as Lutheran minister! Since that time I occasionally also attended the evening devotions, regularly held on Thursdays, which always concluded with Benediction. Here I found a source of grace, and streams of this blessing fell upon my poor heart, enlightening and vivifying and replenishing it with hope; and when, in the end, they fervently sang from the choir:

“Jesus, my Lord, my God, my all!  
 How can I love Thee as I ought?  
 And how revere this wonderous gift,  
 So far surpassing hope or thought?  
 Sweet Sacrament, we Thee adore,  
 O make us love Thee more and more.”—

or:

“I rise from dreams of time,  
 And an angel guides my feet  
 To the sacred Altar-throne,  
 Where Jesus’ heart doth beat.”—

it seemed to me, as if I had been awakened from a long dream, quietly wondering that I had not arrived at the conclusion before that *only in the Catholic*

Church my true home could be, in which they sing in honor of Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament enthroned on the altar:

“Sweet Sacrament, we Thee adore,  
O make us love Thee more and more!”—

And then whenever I remained behind for a short time yet in the quiet church, I was able to pray with much more fervor than ever before, and generally with tears in my eyes and a longing in my heart I went home. Yes, home! Soon God led me home, out of error to truth—in spite of all obstacles—, thither, where alone all wants of the longing human heart are entirely gratified. After such visits I then searched and prayed the more fervently.

Two difficulties especially I yet had to overcome: The dogma of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin, and the administration of the Blessed Sacrament of the Altar under *one* species. The dear Father Gardland helped me to overcome the first, by referring to the omnipotence of God, which, no doubt, could through the merits of Christ preserve Mary from original sin;—and I only wondered that this had not become evident to me before.—The solution of the other difficulty I found in the excellent book “Catholic Belief,” which is to be urgently recommended to all converts. In it, among other reasons, reference is made to the fact that an Ambrose, a Jerome, a Basil, and other Saints *at their death* partook of this Sacrament under *one* kind only. Did these then make themselves guilty of a sacrilegious Communion in their last moment? This is not to be admitted. No, then it was already customary to receive this Sacrament under *one* species, the base being the tradition of the Church, as it also became customary at Baptism (analogous to this), to no longer baptize by immersion,

but by effusion, against which certainly also the Lutherans make no objections. But how wisely the Catholic Church acted in introducing the custom of administering to the laity the Most Blessed Sacrament under *one* kind only, he especially knows how to appreciate, who like me has seen, as Lutheran minister, the administration of the chalice often lead to irreverence of the Sacrament and to disturbance of devotion. Again, is it not unpleasant to see long mustaches dive into the chalice, from which immediately after girls and women are obliged to drink? (For this reason I felt obliged to announce that the men, before going to communion, should kindly trim their mustaches.) I could not refrain from entertaining the idea that many desired the communion-cup, in order to drink some wine also. For many almost *tore* the chalice out of my hands, especially men, who then probably poured down two to three draughts and—my devotion was gone. Truly, the Catholic Church also here, as in so many other things, knew well what she decreed—altogether acting in the tenor of her divine founder, who wanted to set down *no rule for the laity*, when he said: “Drink ye all of this!” or as St. Luke relates: “Take and divide it among you!” Moreover, He has left entirely to His *Church* to regulate this according to the needs of time and circumstances.—The good Sisters also lent me several books; of these I was especially benefitted by the “History of the Reformation in England,” written by the *Protestant* Cobbett, who in it impartially describes the persecutions and all cruelties and iniquities perpetrated at that time against the people of that country, and shows, how the “blessed (?) Reformation” was introduced here as everywhere else *with violence only*, with “blood and sword.” I was also influenced by the thorough work by Milner, “The

End of Religious Controversy," which book dear Father Walsh of Townsville gave to me. The latter also visited me several times, and I frequently called on him in Townsville, where he ultimately helped to solve my last doubts.

It was a matter of course that my evening visits at the Catholic convent and presbytery became known in my parish. I could also foresee that a storm of indignation would arise in my parish against me, as soon as my parishioners would learn that my children, the children of a Lutheran minister, *attended the Catholic school*. But I was prepared for everything. It was, however, especially for the sake of my children—whose *future* was at stake—that *I wanted to become Catholic*. For, when I gazed upon the dear little ones, the eldest of which would soon arrive at the age at which they would have to be "confirmed" Lutheran—should I with the Lutheran "Confirmation" (as it unfortunately happened with my eldest son), surrender them to the erroneous belief of Lutheranism in order to cause them to become Catholics later on—then perhaps under many difficulties and struggles? Yes, upon the whole, I was often seized with solicitous anxiety and silent grief at the thought: Shall these then, like so many others, be delivered over to the sectional confusion and to the imminent danger of falling into striking unbelief in the end, and thus perish forever? Where shall I find—although there certainly is no absolute guarantee for it—at least *foundation for the hope* that they will preserve their Christian faith? Who will vouch for it, when one day my eyes are closed in death, that, exposed to the mercy of the swaying of the majority in the so-called Lutheran parishes, which to-day may vote for a Lutheran, to-

morrow for a Reformed or entirely unbelieving minister, just as the Lutheran weather-vane veers, they will indeed remain even only Lutheran? Will they not, for want of all authority, in the confusion of the disruptions of Protestantism, lose in the end their bit of extenuated Christianity, which Luther has left over, as we see illustrated by so many examples? No, I thought, this they shall never do! Every effort will I make, it may cost what it will, that with me they will all find refuge, as well as security and protection, *there*, where alone this can be founded on the ocean of life: in the arc of the One, Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic Church! *For in Protestantism there is no security and protection, but constantly the greatest danger to lose all faith.* And as for me, I said to myself: This horrible sectional disorder, that confusion of opinions, this appalling discrepancy, especially of the Lutheran "Church," can impossibly represent the true Church; besides she can impossibly be contained "invisibly" in the jumble of sects, since Christ established her as *one* uniform visible communion. Therefore, I know of one Church only, which looks entirely different and stands there *entirely different: united*, in serried ranks, in contrast to the jumble of the sects; as a bulwark, firmly founded upon the rock of truth amidst the billows of misbelief and infidelity—thus she stands; a staunch vessel, powerfully sailing onward through the centuries upon the ocean of time at its head as pilot the supreme Pastor, endowed with divine authority,—thus she continues onward! Centuries pass away, kingdoms vanish, generations decay, people sink into the grave but this Church outlives them all, always the same—yesterday and to-day and forever the same—like her divine founder, whose promise she has that He will be with her even to the consummation of

the world, and that the gates of hell shall not prevail against her! Therefore—I said to myself—for *you* there is but ONE *alternative*: *Either* the Catholic Church is the One True Church—or she is not. The sects are not; is she also not, then there is no Church at all; no truth; no God—and unbelief is right. But God's grace, preserving me from the abyss of unbelief, helped me to decide and planted into my heart the blissful certainty: *Christ has founded but one Church—and there is and can be no other but the Catholic Church!* May Jesus Christ be praised! Thus I was now *Catholic* at heart, and had decided what to do.

During this time, on a Sunday-evening, I preached a sermon on the Savior's word: "*The kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent bear it away*"—and for myself I was now firmly determined on *doing* VIOLENCE, and—in spite of all confronting difficulties and mountains of obstacles—on making every effort, yea, on making the greatest sacrifices, in order to call the true Church mine. And soon, when I commenced to take it serious, I was to experience sufficiently, how much it would cost me. Had, however, *the Lord* not helped me with His grace, I certainly would have lost all courage at the first difficulties, as did the children of Israel in the desert.

My congregation, with the Freemason Riedrich at its head, wanted to belong to the Liberal-Lutherans,—and my *predecessor*, minister Maier, was *also liberal*. Therefore, he had joined a Protestant Ministers' Union, to which all the ministers of the city belonged. When entering upon my charge I had to do likewise in order not to displease my congregation. 'At first, I did not at all sympathize with it, I am now glad of having

belonged to it, since in this manner I practically obtained certain *insight* into the *doings of different sects*. These, however,—e. g. among others the celebration of an “All Sects’ Communion,” at which all ministers with their wives sat in a parlor and received bread and wine, save myself, who was satisfied with looking on—*disgusted me so much that thereby I was still faster driven into the Catholic Church*. But liberal (cf. “Sin we must,” etc.) thought they wished to be in my parish *in other respects*, when it became known that I sent my children to the Catholic school, this “supreme court,” although many other Protestants of the city sent their children to this school, which enjoyed a very good reputation, nevertheless deprived *me* of the right to do so, thus erecting themselves into lords even over my own children, and they ceased, *all of a sudden*, to be *liberal*. That I entertained religious communion in that Society with all kinds of sects, to this they had no objection, yea, even *wished it*; but when I had my own children only participate in the instruction of the *merely secular branches at the Catholic school*, their “liberality” had an end. No, they said, we can never “allow” that—for “then the salary will no longer come in.” (!) If I did not want to be “desposed,” I had to give in. I did so,—also upon the advice of the Catholic Sisters—although with a heavy heart. But it was of no avail! Their *hatred* against the Catholic Church gave Messrs. Riedrich and Paradies no rest; on the other hand my *love* for the Catholic Church gave *me* no rest, so that after a few months I sent my children—to their own joy and that of the Sisters—to the Convent School again. It had then become evident to me that I could no longer remain a Lutheran minister *with conviction*. Besides, one of the

trustees, the rich, but unrefined and ignorant son of Paradies, who had erected the church, went so far as to tell me openly: "*If you do not preach what we want, you can REMAIN HERE no longer!*" But he only expressed what most of these "*liberal*" Lutherans thought. And I thought so too. I thought: As every Protestant "can know everything best himself from the Bible," the "ministry" is superfluous, and I had better resign my ministry as soon as feasible, mindful of the words of Christ: "Let the dead bury their dead! For I no longer wanted to serve as *grave digger* and help in digging *the huge grave of Protestantism*, but preferred to devote my feeble strength to *THAT Church*, in which *He* lives and truly reigns, who is the Resurrection and the Life!—

But how *much* these "Liberals" in my parish, especially the Freemason Riedrich, *hated* not only the Catholic Church, but also in general every thing, which could in the least remind them of it, may be illustrated by another incident: Also in this church, the altar bore the Protestant mourning-color—yes, justly so, ever reminding Protestantism of its own death, which by a slow suicide it will unfailingly meet—; this color, however, did not seem to me to harmonize very well with the approaching "Confirmation." Therefore we covered it with a white linen cloth, upon the front of which my wife had, upon my request, sewed a red cross. But hardly is the celebration ended, there comes into the sacristy to me Mr. Riedrich, as red with anger as a turkey: "That red cross must be removed from the altar-cloth, that is not Lutheran, it's Catholic!" Thus he cried out in the greatest excitement. In his fury this ignoramus of a Freemason was not unlike an ox, which becomes raving whenever you show

him a red rag. For although the white dresses with wreath and veil,—in Philadelphia I first had to introduce with some difficulty the custom of wearing white dresses at “Confirmation”—which the *confirmandae* wore, were evidently an imitation of the *Catholic* custom, nevertheless (probably because he did not know this at all) he was not taking the least offense at this. But he is not the only one among the Freemasons, who fear the red cross so much; I believe that with this holy sign one could make a whole herd of Freemasons, “A. P. A.’s” and other oxen, wild and raving.—Poor Riedrich only did what he had learned among his equals, and therefore was certainly to be excused.—On the other hand I could *not excuse* the Orangeman H—t, who had helped to make the excitement in the parish still greater: He had done somewhat like the former Landgrave Philip of Hesse, since he—certainly without Luther’s express permission—had taken beside his living wife a second—(the niece of the late old minister Schirmeister in Brisbane)—as concubine, and by her had a son, whom he styled his “adoptive son” (!). But nevertheless he was one of the most influential members of the parish, a powerful agent in all parish-affairs. Then it happened that one morning his lawful wife was found—*dangling from a rope* in the stable. Who had committed the deed, no one could say with certainty, but it was supposed that she had done it herself. Of me he required to bury her, I declared that the church *denies ecclesiastical burial to suicides*, and that for this reason I could not come to the burial\*; I finally promised, in this exceptional case, to at least recite a prayer at the grave.

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\* NOTE—Unfortunately (?) there was no King William II of Prussia, who as “*summus episcopus*” could command the pastor to bury the woman without further ado,—for an item appeared in the newspapers recently (1896), announcing that the emperor of Germany, after having been asked for it by telegram, had done so with a Superintendent in Pommerania.

But that seemed not sufficient to Mr. H--t. Therefore he sent me word that I need not come at all, since the minister of the "Church of England" had agreed to perform the funeral services. Since this sad event this man was now my antagonist, and, when my congregation was seized with a panic on account of the Catholic Church, it was a welcome opportunity to him, to help stir up the fire of excitement; for experience teaches that such people are as a rule inspired with an exceptional hatred against the Catholic Church; besides, he also belonged to the secret society, of the Orangemen, which would fain disorganize all civil intercourse and association with Catholics.

All this showed to me only too clearly that, if I wished to remain sincere, I would be obliged to resign my Lutheran ministry; and just these circumstances hastened my determination. Therefore, we held an auction, sold everything at a great loss, and bade our good friends farewell.—As a remembrance I sent our neighbors, the Sisters, the cross, which out of stupidity and malice had been impiously taken down from my church. My two eldest children were the cross-bearers on that occasion, who brought it to their convent, and now, as they wrote us, it occupies a place of honor in their new Convent. May they pray for me when they behold the cross!—We had now decided upon going to the cooler South, to settle down in Brisbane for the time being, where I hoped to obtain a secular position, in order to be able to live henceforward in my conviction as a Catholic.

## CHAPTER XIII.

### SUFFERING ON ACCOUNT OF THE CATHOLIC CREED— IN BRISBANE.

WHEN we were again gliding along the coast of Queensland, just as about two years before—how entirely different was the Then in comparison to the Now. Then we looked to the North full of expectation, where in a respected position our home was prepared for us, where we were awaited with a certain longing, and where we could command a large income; and now?! O how entirely different our prospects were: Without an earthly home and occupation, I with my family swam upon the ocean, forsaken and forlorn—and what awaited us upon our arrival in Brisbane? But I “obeyed, and went out, not knowing whither!”—You will be able to understand when in such a situation a certain fear seized me, the father of a numerous family. But certain that in sincerity to my conviction I could not act otherwise, I consoled myself again, whilst with furtive tears in my eyes it gushed from the depth of my soul:

Heimatlos im fremden Lande,  
Doch nicht ohne Trost und Licht—  
Reissen selbst die staerksten Bande,  
*Jesu Treue* niemals bricht.  
*Heimatlos* auf dieser Erde,  
Doch im Himmel, ewig nicht.  
*Hier* die Fremde, dort ich werde  
Schaun der Heimat ewges Licht!—

*I* certainly *now* felt strong enough to endure all future sufferings. For I had the consolation that I suffered on account of the profession of the Truth, out of love for the holy Catholic Church;—but how did my wife feel? Could she also console herself in this manner? Thus far: unfortunately no!—She hoped, however, that, since *for her sake* I had as yet not been formally received into the Catholic Church, I would again engage in the Lutheran ministry—and hardly believed that my resolution was firm. Did I not, therefore, have to be prepared for many reproaches on her part? Yes, this journey, it was no easy one!—Was it then to be wondered at, if also *in me* thoughts arose, like the one, whether I would also *remain* firm enough, after the first enthusiasm had fled, to make the sacrifice—for me so great—of exchanging my ministry, which had been my delight and pleasure, for another ordinary everyday occupation, etc.? And as the waves before me rose and fell,—were they not entirely a picture of my soul, in which it rocked with fear and hope?—But quietly the ship sailed on, safely guided by the helmsman—should I lose confidence that *my ship of life*, *guided by a much higher hand*, would arrive at its destination? “May He not suffer thy foot to be moved: neither let Him slumber that keepeth thee. Behold He shall neither slumber nor sleep, that keepeth Israel.” (Ps. 120.) So often had these words already consoled me, and again they set my heart at rest, so that I reposed as upon a soft pillow, recollecting the words of St. Peter (I. Peter 5, 7): “Casting all your care upon him, for he hath care of you!”

Thus we arrived at Brisbane—homeless; and the

motto of my life here again repeated itself as a new and still old experience: "For we have not here a lasting city, but we seek one that is to come." (Hebr. 13, 14.) As a matter of course there was no one at the landing place to welcome us. Only the Catholic Cathedral near at hand stood there in silence; but the sight of it alone gave me consolation and encouragement. We stopped at one of the larger hotels; but after a few days we found a furnished house, into which we moved, because we could not buy any furniture, since it was still uncertain, whether I would find a position here. Although I could present very good letters of recommendation of my influential patron Mr. Pfeiffer, etc., this was connected with difficulties, since in consequence of a flood, after strikes and drought had already done much injury, business was almost entirely ruined. Therefore I was encouraged, when some one engaged me as land agent, in order to do business for him in Charters Towers. For thus I was once more enabled to see friends and acquaintances there, and celebrate the lovely feast of Easter in St. Columba's Church, although, as I soon learned, real estate deals could not be made on account of the bad times. Upon my return trip I also visited the dear Father Walsh at Townsville, who comforted and encouraged me. After I had arrived in Brisbane again, we took our circumstances into consideration, since our small amount of money was beginning to run low, and concluded to rent a smaller and cheaper house. But since this was unfurnished, we had to get along as best we could; a large book-box represented our table; the trunks our chairs; and the floor our bed-steads. Here

it was where for the first time the good Father Canali called,\* I having disclosed my conviction and complained of my troubles to the Most Rev. Archbishop Dr. Dunne, who received me very kindly. Father Canali visited us now, as long as we lived in Brisbane, and he faithfully assisted us in word and deed. May God reward him for it in his last moments! Upon his advice we moved into another part of the city—and occupied a small dwelling in the neighborhood of the beautiful St. Patrick's Church. Since I was still without a position and an income, we would have had to suffer hunger here, had not the good priest visited us often and cared for us. Since we lived close to the presbytery, he often shared his meal with us, and other good Catholics brought us victuals or gave us a few pieces of furniture, for which they certainly received little thanks from my wife, since she was unfortunately still prejudiced very much against the Catholic Church. Whenever I went to the Catholic Church with my eldest children, she would stay at home and complain that she no longer had a Sunday—and sad for her indeed the sweet singing from the church near by must have sounded. Although I still owned a small building-lot, it was nevertheless hard to sell, since every one wanted to sell property, but only a few cared to buy, and therefore our circumstances were critical enough. But,

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\* NOTE—Otherwise we received few visitors. Only the visit of one of my "confirmandi", H. H., caused me great joy, since he told me that also he intended to become a Catholic. I encouraged him and then bade him farewell, wishing him God's choicest blessings. This young man had been one of my best and brightest "confirmandi", and thus with the grace of God he found the true path.—And my wife was gladdened by the visit of Pastor Schirmeister's wife, who expressed her sympathy for our straitened circumstances in word and deed. But also I was delighted at the coming of this venerable, pious lady. Her I once found kneeling—something extraordinary among Protestants—all alone before the altar of her church wrapped in prayer. Her words, which bore evidence of sincerity, caused me consolation and encouragement. "If you"—thus she spoke, addressing me—"are convinced that the Catholic Church is the right church, you could not act in a different manner, and do right, if you become Catholic".

the greater the need, the nearer the aid. This we also experienced.

My rich patron and friend Pfeiffer in Charters Towers helped with a small sum, so that we now moved into a better dwelling and did not suffer want. As long as we lived in Brisbane, the rent was paid by the kindhearted Father Canali, who, generally at the end of the week, at morning before the beginning of mass, quietly shoved the necessary sum of money into my coat pocket. But after a daughter had been born to us here, I unfortunately found out to a certainty that to all appearances there were for a long time to come poor prospects that my wife would with me profess the Catholic faith. For, when according to my wish our little daughter was to be *baptized Catholic*, she bitterly opposed me and did not want her to be named *Mary*—out of prejudice against the veneration of the Blessed Virgin Mary—until we finally came to an agreement after all: I desisted from the name Mary, and gave my consent that she call her Martha, she on the other hand would have no objections against having the child baptized in the Catholic Church. Thus it came to an armistice for the time being—the truly lasting peace could be made at the end of the following year. My house, otherwise a place of peace, was now often unfortunately the place of quarreling, and I was considerably disgusted with it. During this time I attended mass every day, went very often to the good Father Canali and other priests, and found a pleasure in playing the organ, since I had permission to practice every day at St. Patrick's Church, and occasionally to play the organ on Sundays. I regularly attended mass with my eldest children on Sundays, and evenings usually went to the lovely Vespers and Benediction at the

Cathedral, where every three weeks at least I could to my greatest edification hear the venerable Archbishop preach with enthusiasm, and, deeply moved by the sweetest singing and finally blessed by Jesus, I left the Dome. And when I then left the lustre of burning tapers and the sweet fumes of incense of the Cathedral with my children and stepped out under the starry azure sky, which with its millions of lights blazing around the "Southern Cross" also quietly held Benediction—alas, how did the bitter reproaches of my wife then pain me, which almost regularly awaited me at home, yes how did it cut us both to the heart no longer to be one in the dearest and most sacred that man owns! Very often in those trying times I also sought refuge in St. Stephens Cathedral during the week, in order then to open my heart to God in prayer, imploring for strength to bear my cross and asking for courage and perseverance. How beautiful indeed is the custom of the Catholic Church to keep the churches open during the day, inviting every one to enter, and thus even giving her children an opportunity, to collect themselves in prayer before the Blessed Sacrament amidst the distraction of the day. *Protestantism* knows nothing like this. But why should its meeting houses be open during the week? For they are no houses of God like the Catholic Church with the Most Holy in its tabernacles, and therefore in all reason remain closed during the week. But the solicitude about the daily bread still weighed heavily upon me, since, on account of the prevailing dullness in trade, notwithstanding the many efforts on the part of influential friends, it was impossible to obtain a suitable position. *A position as minister* could now easily have been obtained in Brisbane, where two Lutheran congregations existed, had I not been a Catholic, and if I could and

would have done like a Mr. Becker. Truly this parish still had a minister, but wanted him no longer. This just exactly suited a certain young man. He had arrived from Berlin only a short time ago, and presented himself to minister Maier in Brisbane, asking him for permission to preach in his church. Maier however, constantly afraid of losing his position, declined, and—justly so—asked the young man for his references. He, however, probably because he had none, refused to show them; on the contrary he declared arrogantly enough that he would nevertheless make a “career” here. The dissatisfaction of that congregation exactly suited him, in order to form his plan of conquest accordingly—and this was built upon “love.” Since this young “hero from Berlin” succeeded in winning the heart of the daughter of the richest man in the parish, he thereby had also won the parish! And without an “ordination” etc., this Berlin sparrow began to chatter lustily in the nest of another, after having thus acquired this parish by art and love (or for ought I care, by “artificial love”). Now let a Catholic still dare to say something against the marriage of priests! It truly is not only for this young man, but also for many other ministers “the door into the sheepfold!” (cf. the elections in Mecklenburg). Nay, rather would I eat dry bread, than to walk insincerely upon such secret paths. Therefore I planned to try my luck with music-lessons. Since the rent was very cheap, we had the good fortune to get a very roomy, beautiful, romantically situated house, which afforded a splendid view, especially upon the Brisbane River, so that we could see all the large ocean-steamers passing by. Although I still owned a small piece of land in Southport, nevertheless I was not able to buy the house, because the value of land

had decreased so much, and there were, therefore, very little prospects of selling this land. Therefore we finally concluded to ask our friend Pfeiffer to buy our land, and let it depend upon the fulfilment of this request, whether or not we should leave Australia, in order to look for a livelihood in Germany or North America. He complied with our request. Therefore I considered it the best, since I had not found a position yet—which, by the way, was made more difficult by the conduct of my wife, who was as yet by no means of the same opinion as I in matters of religion—to go to Germany for the first, whilst *I* hoped that she would there embrace the Catholic Faith with me; *she* on the contrary hoped that I would there again become Lutheran.



## CHAPTER XIV.

### VOYAGE TO GERMANY AND MY SOJOURN THERE.

**T**HAT the voyage to Germany was no pleasure trip, but was connected with many hardships for us, every one will understand, who knows what it means to travel with a family of seven children. Yes, had it only been expedient, we would have very much preferred to leave the ship at Townsville again, in order to remain in Queensland. For we had lived in sunny Australia for almost thirteen years, and in spite of droughts and floods it had become dear to us. But the die was cast, and now it was fair to endure all inconveniences of the voyage in patience. Our steamer, the "Dorunda," belonging to the British India Steam Navigation Company, was an old ship, which was once believed to have been lost in the Bay of Biscay. But since we had not been able on account of our circumstances to wait for the next, better ship, we placed our trust in Him who commandeth both the winds and the sea, and confidently commenced our long voyage, which was to last eight weeks. The people were just coming in great multitudes out of St. Patrick's Church, for it was Candlemas-day, February 2, 1892, as we passed them on our way to the ship. How sad this sight made me! I also would have rather attended Mass with them, instead of parting for ever by a long journey from this sunny land of Spring, the land where I, recognizing the One true Church, had arrived from error to truth. But since *this Church*, as e. g. an

"Established Church of Mecklenburg," is not bound to *one* country, but offers *her children the same house and home in all parts of the world*, I therefore knew that I would find her again everywhere, everywhere the same spiritual home. Therefore, trusting in the intercession of the Blessed Virgin—whose festival the Catholic world was just celebrating—I commended myself and mine to her protection and—away steamed the ship upon the beautiful Brisbane River towards the Ocean! There the beautiful Cathedral, where I had loved to pray, greeted us once more. To the right lay "All Hallows Convent," where the good Sisters lived, who had done us many a favor, and there also rose "Hill Side" once more, which I would fain have kept as home. One villa after the other, hills and valleys, everything, everything gradually vanished from our sight—probably for *ever*! We then passed the solitary light-house at the mouth of the river—and now again the waves of the Pacific Ocean dashed against our ship, which, steaming towards the North, brought us to Townsville in three days.

Here I landed with my eldest daughter, and after having called on the dear Father Walsh, leaving my daughter behind at St. Mary's Convent with her friends, I myself left for Charters Towers in the afternoon, in order to spend the days, whilst the steamer anchored at Townsville, visiting my friends and acquaintances there. I stayed over night with the minister Giezendanner, who curiously enough had become my successor. "Curiously;" for, since the congregation but a short time before had a minister, who *intended* to become a Catholic, it now had called—better hired—one, who *had been* a Catholic. One sees from this, what the consequences must be of the Protestant mode of appointing ministers BY THE CON-

GREGATION: since the latter impossibly can have a sufficient judgment of the qualification of the minister to be appointed, there is, therefore, no guarantee that in this manner it may not just as well get a secret Methodist or infidel, and thus the continued existence of their doctrine is always and again questionable.—Giezendanner was neither Lutheran nor Catholic. To me he said, I admit, that he still wanted to be Catholic. When I reminded him of his duty, then also to do as I had done,—he replied that his “ministry” was too dear to him. But at the same time I could perceive, how *sad* he felt at heart.—I would prefer to pass over a further description of this long voyage, if I did not think that it would probably be of interest to many readers, since it offered various points of interest; but I will here confine myself to the *most interesting*.

After I had once more been refreshed, both as to body and soul, at the home of the good Father Walsh, he had me and my daughter taken to the landing place in his buggy, abundantly supplied with various good things for the voyage; and now, protected against the vast ocean by the walls of the coral reefs extending along the coast, accompanied by the most beautiful weather, we continued our voyage—next in order being Thursday Island. Three or four days later we were there, and I landed in company of my two eldest children, in order there, by visiting the Catholic missionary, to cherish the communion of the One Faith. In the small mission-church, beautifully situated on the slope of a hill, amidst a lovely garden, we also prayed for a felicitous continuance of our journey; and after we had eaten a poor but expensive dinner in a hotel, and also bought several mother-of-pearl shells, which can be had here at a low price, we betook ourselves

to our boat, which was to take us back to the large steamer. Had my guardian angel not protected me, I would' have almost injured my foot whilst entering the boat, since a board, upon which I stepped, broke exactly in the middle.—

Passing through the loveliest groups of islands, thickly covered with palms and cocoanuts and bamboo, our steamer now continued on its course, often meeting canoes of the aborigines and other ships, until we arrived in the harbor of Batavia in about eight days. Everything here bears a Dutch stamp. The landing place towards the harbor is prettily curbed with hewn stone, and paved with flag stones. Only a few steps, and we were in the railway-station. From here, accompanied by my son Constantine, I took the train for Batavia and arrived there in about an hour. The road-bed was often fenced in with green, well-kept, hedges. The European quarter, which is said to be very pretty, I have not seen, and therefore only took a very bad impression of Batavia along with me. For the Chinese and Javanese, who inhabit this quarter, make it ugly and not to be enjoyed by the European, and during rainy weather the mud mocks at every description. In a park I saw people entirely or half-naked stretched out upon iron bedsteads in the open air. Close by generally stood a cooking stove, table and chair as domestic accommodations. Houses these people did not seem to own. Since it began to rain, we soon hastened back to our ship.—A fortnight later we were in the harbor of Colombo, which is situated on the island of Ceylon. Already at the distance of several miles one inhales the sweet perfume, which the many lovely flowering-trees, especially also cinnamon-trees, in great numbers spread here. Colombo has a beautiful harbor, well protected by a high elevated dam

against storms; but it also contains much misery. There men seem to be of less value than horses, since most of the vehicles were drawn by the former; one could also see this from the poor coolies, who had to supply the ship with coal. They took their meals, consisting of rice boiled in water, sitting on the floor, whilst their hats had to supply the place of plates, and their fingers the knives or forks. And with my own eyes I saw how one cooly almost killed the other in a most violent fit of anger. Colombo itself I have not seen; my wife, however, in company of a young girl from the ship, had herself rowed to the shore, and after she had returned, she related much about the large museum there, which she had gone to see.—Another fortnight—and we came to Aden, a miserable fishing village, where we took in coal. Here Arabs came on board, who among other things sold corals, ostrich feathers, and ostrich eggs, which latter I saw for the first time, on this occasion. Through the Strait of Bab el Mandeb our ship entered the Red Sea, which in truth is not red, but has a yellowish green color. Here the wind blew rather fiercely, and we thought of the drowning of King Pharaoh and his army. Mount Sinai, who, with his head wrapped in clouds, majestically loomed up before us in the distance, reminded us of the making of the covenant, and aroused in me the desire also to see Golgatha, where the grace and truth were sealed by Jesus Christ on the cross. But, since it was impossible for me to fulfill this wish, as much as I would have loved to visit the Holy Land, to which we were now so near, I had to content myself to be able to buy a few small remembrances of Palestine in Suez. For here every kind of people, especially Arabs and Syrians, came on board, and offered for sale to the passengers: corals, mother-

of-pearl shells, rosaries, crucifixes, watch-stands, etc., artfully carved out of olive-wood from Mount Olivet. Among other things I bought a pretty watch-stand made of olive-wood,—in memory of Jerusalem, to which I had here been so close, without being able to go there.

“Jerusalem, Du hochgebaute Stadt,  
 Wollt’ Gott ich waer’ in Dir;  
 Mein Herz so gross’ Verlangen hat  
 Und ist nicht mehr bei mir:  
 Weit ueber Berg und Thale, wohl ueber blaches  
 Feld  
 Schwingt es sich ueber alle und eilt aus dieser  
 Welt!”

Thus it echoed in my heart at that time, full of yearning for Jerusalem; and this yearning for the terrestrial Jerusalem changed into yearning for the celestial, which is above, the mother of us all, the holy triumphant Church in heaven!—

The passage through the Suez Canal, by the Lesseps monument—which has been erected there in honor of the builder of the canal—was made but slowly. Since the canal is so narrow that two ships can hardly clear the way for each other, the steamers must go very slowly here, and still it happened to us that in one night we got aground at least a dozen times; yes, on the last morning previous to our passing out of the canal, we were stuck so fast that we could only get afloat with the aid of another ship. Thus we came to Port Said and immediately continued our voyage upon the Mediterranean Sea; in barely a week, steaming along Sicily’s beautiful coast through the Strait of Messina, we finally anchored in the admirably beautiful harbor of Naples. Here several Catholic

Sisters came on board, in order to collect among the passengers for their convent or hospital. I told them that I was on the way to become a Catholic, heard kind and encouraging words from them, whereupon they took leave. Then I was seized with a great longing to see Rome; however, on account of my family, which I could not leave alone, I could not yield to it, but had to leave Naples with my family the next evening, thus continuing our voyage upon the Mediterranean Sea. It was indeed an imposing spectacle, Naples with its beautiful harbor and Mount Vesuvius in the background: Whilst during the day Vesuvius appeared as if calmly smoking like a sedate old man, over whom centuries and centuries had already passed away, now at night-fall the fire out of his (new) crater amidst his two peaks flashed ghostlike, as if down below in the earth Vulcan were carrying on his business, forging his iron with all his might, so that smoke and fire powerfully shot up out of the funnel. And now when one light after the other, first ten, now twenty, then hundred—I ceased counting—finally many, many lights rose along the bay of the harbor, like lovely stars, reflecting in the water, showing us the way, the scene became beautiful, so beautiful that, although I have seen so many other beautiful harbors of the world, I also would almost have liked to say: “See Naples, and then die!”—

After we had passed the rocky gate of Gibraltar, a certain fear seized me in regard to the Bay of Biscay, so treacherous to navigation. But my fear was unfounded. The waters, I admit, were a little agitated, the weather, however, was very pleasant, only we, who were accustomed to a warmer climate, severely felt the cold more and more right along. After about three days we arrived at London. Since we remained here

until the next day (April 1,) only, I have just seen enough of London to get in some degree an impression of this giant city and its immense traffic. It was eight o'clock in the evening as we left London with the express train for Harwich. Never before in my life have I traveled so fast, for already in two hours we were there, in order to leave at once for Hamburg with the steamer which lay in readiness. The North Sea, otherwise as a rule turbulent, and often terribly stormy, this time to my surprise presented an entirely different aspect: it was as calm as a pond, as smooth as glass! Therefore we arrived at Hamburg early on Sunday morning. Agents of all kinds came on board. One of them, whom I intrusted with the care of our luggage, made the remark: "For money you can get *everything* here!" A word, expressing very appropriately the prevailing materialism in Hamburg. Everything for money! That is unfortunately the countersign among the majority of the people of our days; and "gratification" is the pass-word.

On Sunday, April 3, 1892, at two o'clock in the afternoon, we left Hamburg. My heart beat faster upon seeing my native country again after so many years. But, when I saw the many people in the fields, *who worked on Sunday*, I became sad, and asked myself: "*Is Mecklenburg still a Christian country?!?*" And again I encountered materialism in all its harshness: The wealthy landlords revel in opulence and luxury, whilst the poor laborers as their servants must toil for them during the entire week, so that only the Sunday remains for them on which to perform their own work. If that is not *paganism*, then there is none.—As far as Hagenow the train went pretty fast; but from there on I supposed I was in a horse-tramway, so slowly we made headway. When in a joking

manner I remarked upon this to a fellow-passenger, he replied: "Well, you must remember, that this is also the Mecklenburg Friedrich Franz Railroad, which sides with the conservatives."—At four o'clock in the afternoon, accompanied by the fairest Sunday weather, our train stopped in the railway-station of Schwerin. Was I dreaming?—Hardly could I believe it—there they stood, the dear relations! But how old my dear father had become in the meantime! There also our eldest son Martin looked forward so full of expectation and joy! How he had grown, since he had left us at the age of eight years. After a hearty welcome we now went to the residence of my father, and only late in the evening, very tired from the long voyage, which had lasted more than eight weeks, we retired.

Though the reception was hearty, our sojourn in Germany was by no means very pleasant for us. Not only did the thought of being obliged to leave our son Martin go along with us if we required it, seem to put my relations out of humor, but soon the Catholic Religion, to which I secretly adhered, became the cause of many disagreements. For after I had been there a few days I told my sister in confidence what was going on within me. She, however, abused the confidence I had placed in her, and disclosed my Catholic *disposition*. Several times I had also attended mass early in the morning, whilst on Sunday I usually attended services at the Dome, for the sake of peace. But my early walks had been noticed; and when my dear father learned that on one occasion I with my wife had attended high mass in the Catholic Church,—the quarrel commenced downrightly; yes, I now began to taste of the bitterness of those words of the Saviour: "And a man's enemies shall

be *they of his own household.*" Since they noticed that my wife did not share "my views," they endeavored to influence her, in order to confirm her in her Lutherdom. But fortunately, as has been mentioned, she had been in the Catholic Church with me, and there had heard an excellent sermon, so that she came home actually enraptured. My father reproached me—it was said that we *both* had already been received (!) into the Catholic Church—and was taken ill. They put the blame on me! I had—so it was said—overexcited him. But he had only caught a cold, and I for my part had constantly avoided a controversy, in order not to injure his health. I, however, went into the sick-room, telling him that I felt sorry, if I pained him with my conviction; but that I could do nothing *against the Truth*. He became pacified and recovered. However, in the eyes of my step-mother I could no longer *pray*. At table, when I was ready to say grace, she declared briefly and angrily: "Martin, *I* shall pray!"—But from this time forward our son Martin was especially watched by them. When one Sunday I wished to take him along to the Dome, he was induced to go with his aunt to the castle-church, where he had been "confirmed" on the Sunday following our arrival. But that actually looked, as if at the Dome in Schwerin a doctrine were preached different from that in the castle-church; that may all be, it is not uncommon among the Lutherans in Germany. Again an example of the unity of the "Church" of the "pure Gospel and Sacrament!"—The Dome had received a beautiful, tall steeple, for the building of which a Count Bernstorff donated the money,—perhaps in quiet hopes (?) that this edifice should in the near future again be used for Catholic divine services; at least the golden *cross* upon its steeple, which now looks down upon the whole

city as the victorious sign of Redemption, seems to point in this direction. It also was new to me that *candles* burned upon the altar of the Dome during divine services; that had not been the case formerly. When I expressed my (glad) surprise at this to my father, saying it looked Catholic, he supposed that this had always been the custom at the Dome,—and nevertheless I know for certain that this is not so. But—the Grand-duchess belongs to the Greek rite; for her sake perhaps the candles were “thrust upon” the people, which, if it were not simply obliged to obey in the “established Church,” would certainly oppose such “papistical innovations.”—I held evening devotions with my family alone from now on; but they endeavored to hinder our Martin as much as possible from attending the same. But the curiosity of Protestants is almost ridiculous! Thus my father asked me whether he could be present at our devotions. “Certainly,” I said. But our prayerbooks had secretly been inspected—and now it was a fact, *we* were Catholic. I then made no secret of it any longer. One of my cousins, a religious and educated matron, therefore said to me: “And now, Martin, you want to become Catholic and *adore* the mother Mary?!” I replied smilingly that her question proved how little she understood about the Catholic Church. If she would know the Church, she would also become a Catholic. She then told me I should at least speak once with Bard—“President of the High Consistory.” But this good man could impossibly shake my conviction, since he himself complained so much of the sad condition of the Lutheran “Church.” He told me of his son, who was minister in the United States only a short time, but had already made the saddest experiences. It could, therefore, be of no use to

me to enter a controversy with him. Upon the whole I was surprised at the general helplessness of the "Lutheran pious" in regard to the ecclesiastical conditions, prevailing there. But only ONE advice I have for them, which, when followed, at once leads them out of this labyrinth more safely, than the thread of Ariadne guided Theseus: Subject your reason in obedience to faith to the authority of the true Church and—become *Catholic*! For if you, who still love Jesus sincerely, do not wish to lose all Christian faith, then, with the power of infidelity increasing, there will be nothing else left for you to do after all. Therefore once more I call out to you, who are made uneasy by secret fear and solicitous care, especially for the future of the "Established Church of Mecklenburg": Become Catholic! Only in this manner will you find true rest for your souls! But that is certainly not so easy. Whoever, like most of the Protestants, with prejudice and bias, looks upon the Catholic Church, will not find the Truth. "*God will have all men to be saved, and to come to the knowledge of the truth,*" but only to the SINCERE He will give success; only to him, in answer to his sincere *prayer*, the eyes of his soul will be opened to the knowledge that, what until then he has opposed as the Catholic Church, was a *fantom*, which merely existed in his imagination, whilst *in reality the Catholic Church is entirely different*, and is on the contrary the source of all Truth and the root of all Beauty, since she has the true Beauty itself, Jesus Christ, the Son of God and Mary, present upon her altars in the Blessed Sacrament. It is only to be deplored that also *pious* Lutherans understand so little whereupon their faith really rests. When I proposed to my pious aunt T. to lend her several Catholic books, so that she could judge impartially for herself,

she said: "No, Martin, bring me no Catholic books, I have the Bible!" But where did you get the Bible? That is the question. And how do you know that the Bible and the books contained therein are the Word of God? That is the other question. And how do you know that the translation, which you have in your possession, is correct? That is the third question, etc. If Protestants would only seriously meditate upon these questions, they would, with the assistance of the grace of God, soon come to a clear understanding, knowing that also their faith rests upon the authority of *the Catholic Church*, to whom the treasure of the Truth of the written as well as the unwritten Word of God is entrusted, whilst she can at all times confidently rely upon the promise: "*But when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will teach you ALL TRUTH!*" But what should a person say, when learned, theologically educated men, like my uncle Lorenz, Geheimer Oberschulrat, (privy counselor of the board of education), can *at the most* only make the concession: "It is true, the Catholics *also* have the Word of God!" Very gracious you are indeed, Mr. Privy Counselor! Have they perhaps received it from the Lutheran "Church?" Have not, on the contrary, the Lutherans taken the few scraps of truth, which they still retain, from the Church, which is *the pillar and ground of the truth!*? Yet one ceases to wonder at the *conceit* prevailing among Lutherans, when one hears that educated Protestants, as e. g. my cousin Ch., sometimes in all seriousness make the assertion: "The Emperor of Germany is the head of the Church!" I wonder where he found this wisdom in his Bible! That certainly reminds a person of the poetical accomplishment in the 'Volksblatt fuer Stadt und Land' of Nathusius (No. 1. 1872):

“Du hingst dem Bibelsohn  
Den Kaisermantel um;  
Auf Kaiserthronen sitzt  
Dein Evangelium.”

(Thou has invested the Bible's son with imperial robes; upon the imperial throne sits Thy Gospel.)

Therefore Protestants need only *ask* this “Gospel”—and all differences among them would have to come to an end at once!?

The reader will be able to imagine that under these circumstances our stay with the relations could not be of long duration. Besides, since the weather was also so inclement the first few weeks that we, who were accustomed to a warm climate, only seldom went out, I did not have the time to make many trips in Germany. Twice I went to Suelstorf, where my father had been minister. I prayed at the grave of my dear mother and then—my sister quarreled with me. Once also, since it happened to be a Sunday—almost the only day, on which the Lutheran churches are open—I was in church there; in the same, which I had attended as a boy. Everything was still unchanged and exactly as ugly; and the interior with the dusty black altar made a decrepit impression upon me, as if it were no longer worth the while to make restorations here—a true likeness of the decrepit Lutherdom, for which no sensible person now spends much money. Since the divine services passed protestantly bare, the sermon, although the essential thing in the Protestant cult, was sleepily and softly delivered with closed eyes and, as it seemed, also heard in the same manner, one can imagine, how little “edified” I left the church with the few hearers—again “enough to become a Catholic!”—Not much different I found the divine services at the

church in New Buckow, where I had spent my earliest childhood. I sat upon the same place, where I had often sat with my dear deceased mother—but all pews were nearly empty, and again I thought of “the voice of one crying in the desert.” But this “desert” did not seem to make a very sad impression upon the old minister—still the same one as in my childhood—, so much he seemed to be accustomed to it; “also a grave-digger!” thought I. After the conclusion of the sermon—the services were immediately over after that—I greeted him, whilst the rector of the school there introduced me to him, and joyfully he recognized me. Upon his kind invitation I went with him into his palatial residence, where I was kindly treated and received with unfeigned joy. In the now following conversation I openly expressed my thoughts about the sad conditions prevailing in the Lutheran “Church.” He, however, said that I should only pluck up courage again, etc. That he indeed did not lose courage during all those many years, is almost incomprehensible to me—with *such* church-attendance. But these ministers of the state are in *such easy circumstances* that perhaps for that reason they do not lose courage so easily—and become Catholic.

Since my relations and especially my wife, who was still an enthusiast of the Lutheran “Church,” urged me so much to assume a ministerial charge again, I made a trip to Pommerania for their sake, in order to, perhaps *for a short time*, officiate as minister in the Old-Lutheran synod of Breslau. For Father Jahnel in Berlin, delegate of the Prince-Bishop of Breslau, had, upon my inquiry, written me to do the same, since he thought it were with me “only a vague feeling,” which urged me, but by no means a clear resolution, therefore the time to slur the bridge and become Cath-

olic had not yet come!—so much the less did I believe to do wrong herewith, since one certainly should not trust *his own* judgment so easily. But from this trip I returned entirely unsatisfied, so that I longed still more for the Catholic Church. For everything I saw and heard among the Old-Lutherans there, was but a new reason for me to become Catholic!—I had visited “Pastor” Seidel in Angermuende; but the impression, which I received from the “ecclesiastical” conditions there, was, briefly said, *sectarian*. The parsonage comparatively very large; and nevertheless the church very small. From Catholic times there still stands upon a vacant place an old, beautiful, large church, which, however, is used as a hay barn, etc. When I asked the minister why he with his congregation had not rather made efforts to obtain this *large* church, instead of building such a small church, since he certainly would have been able to obtain this beautiful old edifice cheaply, he said, it was *much too large* for his congregation. Therefore again a consequence of the “blessed Reformation!” Although the people are *more*, nevertheless many churches have since then become *superfluous* in Germany. I wonder whether that signifies a “progress” of ecclesiastical life?! Yea, also this sad irreligiousness of the German people must be accounted for by *that* man, whose bust that minister had placed upon his desk for veneration. He certainly agreed with the opinion of another German Lutheran minister, who, when I referred him to the sublime dignity of the Blessed Virgin, to whom indeed with much more reason veneration were due than to Luther, whose picture one could at present see shining in many Lutheran churches, he said: “That is still very much the question!” (whether the Blessed Virgin were higher in

dignity than Luther.) Yes, among the Lutherans "it is still the question," and for all their open questions they soon will not know which is which. Finally all truth is questioned by the Protestants, whilst they press out the Bible to such a degree that nothing but the dry leaves remain. And although, now and then, the Lutherans (e. g. Guerike) still lay some stress upon Tradition, they nevertheless only accept whatever suits them; as for the rest *they make their own Tradition*—in contradiction to the Protestant formal principle. Therefore I assert that among the Lutherans, i. e. among those who really are such as yet, as well as in the Catholic Church, it is Tradition,—certainly a false a self-made one—which aside of the written "Luther-Gospel" is received as an authority; only with the great difference that there is among the poor Lutherans no living authority, which on the ground of Tradition could decide for the entire Church in matters of faith and morals, so that in consequence, among the Lutherans, as among all Protestants, all arising "open questions" constantly remain open—for all eternity. For the Bible is but a book, which cannot interpret itself, just as little as the secular state law can interpret itself *without the authorized judge*, and be applied to the individual cases. That Lutherdom *has not disappeared much sooner, it owes only to the lucky circumstance that inconsequently, and by digression from its formal principle, it endeavors to make its tradition an authority*—which certainly without a living, personal authority nevertheless again and again, will fail. For this reason then the great dissension among the Lutherans, who partly adhere to this, partly to that personage excelling among them, and thus are scattered in different directions, exactly because they are without a centre, and a divinely authorized su-

preme pastorate. That then is the end of Lutheranism, and fulfilled is entirely:

*“Nicht Gottes Wort—doch Luther’s Lehr  
Vergehet immer mehr und mehr.” \**

(Not God’s Word—but Luther’s doctrines are disappearing more and more.)

After I had then returned from Prussia to Schwerin, we prepared for our departure—to North America. Since we intended to leave our eldest son Martin in Germany for the sake of my father, we consoled ourselves with the thought that in America we were nearer to him than in Australia. For I had no desire to remain in Germany, since I did not like it there any more, irrespectively of the ecclesiastical conditions. But, if I should say what has been the impression in religious respect, which I took with me from Mecklenburg, I cannot but express the hope here: Mecklenburg will again become Catholic—within not very distant times! For, what my dear father—who could in no other way explain my affection for the Catholic Church—once said of me to my wife: “he always had such a pietistic bent,” this then indeed can be said of the Mecklenburg people as a whole; however, this “bent” towards God can only fully arrive at its object in the One, True Church, in which alone the *true* practical piety is at home, whose inmost essence does not merely consist in beautiful thoughts and soft sentiment, but in *deeds*, acts of charity to God and our neighbor—where, therefore, it is seriously urged that from an unjust one, man *become* more and more a “self-justified” one, certainly *not* by himself, but alone by *sanctifying grace*.

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\* These words are a *corrected* boastful saying of the Lutherans: “God’s Word and *Luther’s Doctrine* (!) do never cease”.

## CHAPTER XV.

ONCE MORE ON THE WAY TO AMERICA, CONVERSION AND PUBLIC RECEPTION INTO THE CATHOLIC CHURCH (AT DAVENPORT, IOWA), AND THE CHOICE OF A NEW VOCATION.

UNDER such circumstances the departure from Germany was, as can be understood, not hard; only now and then the thought oppressed me excessively that my wife, as it seemed, wanted to *remain Lutheran by all means*, which would probably compel me, once more to make a sad attempt at a position as Lutheran minister. But this affair I placed into the hands of God, entrusting myself and my dear ones to His further guidance.

On May 21, we left Schwerin, in order to embark at Bremerhaven for North America. In Bremen, however, I liked it so well that I certainly would have liked to take up my abode here. Bremen, this ancient episcopal seat of St. Ansgar, with its time-honored juty-houses, the lovely gardens in front of them, the wide, cleanly kept streets and—which to me was of the greatest importance—its beautiful Catholic church, attracted me very much. Here a person also felt more like a cosmopolitan than in Mecklenburg, whose narrow-minded inhabitants hardly know nor want to know of anything else but their own country with its almost Russian conditions, since indeed their world seems to be at an end with Mecklenburg. But I did not fail to view the curiosities of Bremen. The "*Bleikammer*" at the Dome especially aroused my greatest

interest. For here lay six or seven corpses of different rank and sex, although some were already more than three-hundred years old, but as yet were *not decomposed*, like the body of that slater, who, falling from the high roof of the steeple of the Dome, found his death and strangely enough also found his burial here;—one still saw the mouth of the corpse wide-open with terror.—The Dome, like so many other beautiful church edifices, torn from the Catholic Church during the “time of the Reformation,” stands there with its two towering steeples as a majestic monument of mediæval architecture. But that is all: Its interior makes a void and empty appearance, so that the words of the Psalmist can not in the least still be applied to it, which certainly can be said of every Catholic church, more or less: “All the glory of the king’s daughter is within.” It is therefore similar to a girl, who is outwardly beautifully adorned, but whose soul has lost its most beautiful lily-white ornament through the devastations of impurity. As void and empty, as the heart of such a girl, is the interior of this splendid edifice. Especially upon entering the church a person is immediately struck by the disfigured and marred appearance of the sanctuary. And just as void it was inside, when I attended Reformed divine services there at noon. In the vast space of the Dome, offering room for several thousand, about *ten* worshippers had appeared, whose devotion was indeed restricted to a song and a sermon only. After the conclusion of this devotion, when walking around in the Dome, the confessionals, remnants of Catholic times, but now set aside, especially aroused my interest, which with some well-preserved crucifixes, statues and pictures out of Catholic times were, as someone said, preserved here in remembrance “of the superstition.”—How much

different on the contrary was the impression, which I received in the Catholic Church! Although the much smaller church certainly can not compete in its outward appearance with the Dome, still it also makes a good impression as to its exterior. But how surprised was I when I entered. Even in all the aisles the pious worshippers knelt, so that I could not find room otherwise, than upon the choir. Upon the beautiful high altar many tapers were burning, and solemnly the sublime sacrifice of the holy mass progressed—hastening to meet Him, who in every holy mass truly and hypostatically comes to visit His people with His divine and human presence.—How miserable on the other hand the Reformed divine services at the Dome! In the Catholic church active, ecclesiastical life, whilst void emptiness in the once so animated halls of the Dome! In short, the contrast between the two was like Spring and Winter, death and life;—and it seemed, as if the Dome were mourning for its vanished glorious past—the minister, however, were preaching the *funeral sermon* for it.

After we, my wife with our two eldest children and I, had yet attended a rosary-devotion with a sermon: Watch ye, and pray, etc., at the Catholic church, which devotion was held as a farewell-devotion for the Catholic emigrants, we embarked on the next day at Bremerhaven. The service on the “Lahn”—one of the floating palaces of the North German Lloyd—certainly left nothing to be desired. But one thing, nevertheless, did not suit me: One day the “order” came that the passengers must all go to the physician of the ship, in order to be *vaccinated*. Therefore also upon this ship the “filthy vaccination.” Since we had already

come into contact with it on the "City of New York," as we, on our voyage to Australia, had permitted our two small children to be vaccinated, of which the one, probably in consequence thereof, took sick and died,—and since then I had out of principle also become a decided opponent to compulsory vaccination—I simply declared that as an Australian citizen I would out of principle never consent to it. What would have happened, had not the physician been especially benevolent to us, I do not know. He himself knew of no other way of helping us out of the predicament, than simply to hand us a "vaccination certificate," which we could present upon landing. But one sees, how with all the boasted enlightenment of our times the "vaccination superstition" nevertheless still requires its victims. When after eight days we landed at Hoboken, the vaccination certificate was honored; we took a carriage, and, for the sake of my wife, stopped at the Lutheran Immigrant House.

Since my wife was not to be moved, to become a Catholic, I did not as yet deem it time to "slur the bridge." But I felt so uneasy, and was most of the time in a restless, irritated mood. I only felt *well*, whenever, as on one evening, I could go to a Catholic chapel. But unfortunately! there were no divine services; confessions were heard only—and *I* also would fain have gone to confession, but was not yet allowed to do so! I can not at all say what my condition was. It is true, I once made an attempt to speak to a priest; but he was not at home. At the Immigrant House, on the other hand, I saw the Lutheran minister Paulsen from Kropp, who is especially renowned in Schleswig-Holstein. Under different circumstances I would have been glad to meet this personage, but thus he was indifferent to me. I heard only after-

wards from the "president"—I do not remember of what synod—that he was an *unwelcome* guest to him, who, uncalled for, concerned himself about their synodal affairs and thus would only beget discord. Thereby I thought of minister Herlitz of Melbourne, who had also done similarly in Queensland. Tired of the many travels, I would fain have remained in New York, but, since I could not at once get a parish here, we first of all left for Dubuque, where I presented myself to my old teacher, Professor S. Fritschel, to whom I had already written from Germany. He received us very *affectionately*; but he had no position, since, as he said, he had not expected me *so soon* from Germany. Whilst now after several days of a pleasant stay my wife and children went to relations, I remained upon the invitation of the Professor, in order to participate in a synodal meeting at Strawberry Point, Iowa. Here I met many old acquaintances, also the minister List, the same who was at one time so much in love with the hymn by Luther :

"Nun freut euch, liebe Christengemein',  
Und lasst us froehlich springen."

(Rejoice, dear Christian congregation, and let us joyfully jump.) However, he did not feel like "jumping," for he complained very much of the sad conditions among the Lutherans. I felt very sorry for him indeed, since he looked prematurely old and careworn—probably in consequence of the much useless "grave-digger work." Also whatever I heard otherwise at the synodal meeting, was "grave-digger work;" for whatever the one erects to-day is often torn down again by the other on the morrow. Professor Fritschel—in opposition to the Missourians—struggled to set

up a tolerably reasonable doctrine of repentance; but of course remained standing half-way, in order not to reach over to the Catholic side. According to his doctrine, man has still the liberty, when the grace of God knocks at the door of his heart, to say No, and to prevent it from entering, but has no longer retained the faculty to say Yes, and to open his heart to grace. But what a queer contradiction! If man has still the liberty to resist the grace of God, he must certainly also have the liberty *not* to resist the grace of God or to accept it—otherwise he is by no means still free, but a bound servant of the devil, who has not even retained the faculty to consent to redemption, so that *sin has become his nature*—he therefore is irretrievably lost, just like the devil himself. Here the only question is: *Either—or*. Either Luther's doctrine of repentance with the *servo arbitrio* (enslaved will) is correct, and the Catholic doctrine wrong—then, however, man, completely deprived of his freedom, no longer responsible for his deeds, and the fault to be thrown upon God—or, on the other hand, the doctrine of the Catholic Church is correct, which attributes to man *still the freedom*, although *not the power*, to repent, and Luther's doctrine is wrong, according to which man is *forced* into heaven like a log or stone. One can not sail between the two without finally getting upon sand—to the notorious stone and block theory, and thus to fall upon the doctrine of absolute predestination, according to which some *must* be saved, and others *must* be damned. There is no third.—My impression of this synodal meeting was, consequently, very sectarian indeed, and for this reason I did not wait until its end, but continued my journey.

Our stay at A. with the relations was for me almost still more unpleasant than our stay in Mecklenburg

had been. I had no real occupation; but many temptations. Finally I concluded, yielding to the urging of my wife, to go *anywhere*, and then to do finally, whatever I would acknowledge as the right thing before God. I thought: if I obtain a parish without difficulty, I will accept it *temporarily*; if not, then it is certain that now the time has come for me to make the deciding step, for which I was longing.—Grossman, president of the Iowa-synod, had said to me in regard to a position that his synod had no position for a minister with so large a family as mine; also his son-in-law K. could in his position no longer support himself with his thirteen children. Thus the same man, who at one time advised and pressed me to enter the bonds of matrimony as soon as possible, since married life were cheaper, now acknowledged that *his synod had no position for a married minister* like myself: a quiet, indirect *testimony for the celibacy* of the Catholic Church. But he made me the proposition to accept a professorship at a college in Texas; but luckily nothing became of it. Now I made an attempt—one sees that I have not acted rashly—to obtain a parish in the “Evangelical Synod of the West,” whose queer attitude towards the symbols of the Lutheran “Church” seemed to have been *made extra for me* under my circumstances. For in their synodal constitution it said *that they would agree to the Lutheran confessions, as long as these agreed with the Word of God*. Thus, it seemed, I could for sometime yet get along with this “liberal” synod, since the Lutheran symbols did not prevent me from also *living for my CATHOLIC conviction, agreeing with the living Word of God*.

Therefore, I left and took my eldest daughter Clara with me, who at that time was only twelve years of

age, but, attached to the Catholic Church with all her heart, was already very intelligent and sensible for her age, in order to withdraw her from the Protestant influences at the relations. We first left for Waverly; and, since Grossman's "position" was still to be waited for, we left for Gladbrook, requested to do so by the president of the "Evangelical Synod," where a congregation of this synod was in quest of a minister. Since, however, this *Lutheran* congregation had been *deceived* with a *Reformed* catechism, but, nevertheless, could not or would not see into it; and because I was not willing to have my children learn e. g. the commandments according to Reformed numeration, so that they would then later—as Catholics—have had to "learn *over*" *everything*,—my appointment simply failed on account of my open protest against this catechism. But there were also *Freemasons* in this congregation, since the minister there said that they *paid* the best.—Therefore I returned to Waverly with my daughter, glad of heart, *now clearly understanding that now the time of the decision had come*.—Here, consequently, at the same place, where I had at one time been made a Lutheran minister, I finally decided *definitely to seek salvation in the Catholic Church*. Here I clearly recognized that it was God's will, after Grossmann had fed me for a time with the promise of a "position," now "*to slur the bridge behind me*," in order to save myself and my dear ones at last out of the quicksand of error to the *terra firma* of the certain truth of the Catholic Church. Yes, now my dream was to come true, which I had once in Charters Towers: I sailed *alone* in a ship, all alone. There at last the ship ran upon a sand-bank. But I saw at some distance from me a firm castle upon an elevation. Thither, I resolved, to save myself; but I first had to wade through

deep water. Then I was saved.—Upon the advice of Father Sullivan in Waverly, at whose church on Sunday we had attended mass, I resolved to go to *Davenport*. On this Sunday we visited former Catholic neighbors, in order to tell them of my resolution. They well remembered me after so many years. I, however, told them, how the baptismal-dress which had been worked by Catholic Sisters, and which we had bought from them at one time for our eldest child, had not only been worn by every one of my children at their Baptism, but with the last, which had been baptized *Catholic*, had at last attained its original end. We enjoyed the evening very much and sang many a Catholic song.—

On the next day we left Waverly. When we arrived at Davenport—oh! how sadly did I feel what it means: homeless! Yes, in a twofold sense I was homeless: without an earthly and without a spiritual home, a pilgrim, who “has not a lasting city,”—thus I wandered about. But now, thank God! it should become different. “I will arise, and will go to my father!”—thus I could also well say. For Truth my soul was thirsting, for home my heart was longing—and now at any price, may it cost whatever it will, I wanted to get home, to the One, True Church of Christ here upon earth—casting all earthly care upon God. We came into the neighborhood of St. Joseph’s Church. We entered, in order there to pray and then knocked at the door of the presbytery. By the aged Father Niermann we were kindly and sympathetically received and then shown to “Mercy Hospital” as temporary home.—The following poem shows my condition at that time and expresses my disposition in the same;

Verstossen aus dem Elternhaus,  
 Zog ich in weite Welt hinaus;  
 Ich irrte lange traurig fort  
 Und wusste nicht, nach welchem Ort.

Mein Herz war schwer, das Auge nass,  
 Verloren war, was ich besass:  
 Das Vaterhaus, der eigne Herd,  
 Den man doch schætzet Goldes wert.

Ein armer Pilger in der Welt,  
 Fast ohne alles Gut und Geld;  
 Nur eine liebe Kinderschaar—  
 So sucht' ich Zuflucht am Altar;

Am Altar, wo das Sacrament,  
 Wo einsam still das Lichtlein brennt,  
 Wo Jesus wohnt in Brodsgestalt—  
 Dahin zog mich ein' suess' Gewalt.

Mein Sorgen und mein' Suenden schwer  
 Und meines Herzens heiss' Begehr,  
 Das klagte ich dem Heiland nah;  
 Und seine Antwort hoert' ich da;

“Du unruhvolles Menschenkind,  
 Bei Mir Dein Herz nur Ruhe find't;  
 Denn hier ist Trost und suess Licht,  
 Das endlich Dir durch Wolken bricht!”

“Im Tabernakel jeder Zeit  
 Ist eine Ruhstatt Dir bereit;  
 In Gottes Kirche findest Du  
 Fuer's arme Herz die wahre Ruh'!”—

Und aus der Kirche ging ich fort,  
 Ich wusste nicht, nach welchem Ort :—  
 In's Pfarrhaus trat ich dann hinein,  
 Und nun schon sah ich Sonnenschein.

Ein Priester kam in weissem Haar—  
 Er wusste bald, was mit mir war :  
 Dass ich zur wahren Kirche woll't,  
 Die lieber mir, als alles Gold.

Er wies zum Hospital mich hin—  
 Barmherz'ge Schwestern sind darin—  
 Und eine Raststatt fand ich hier :—  
 Mein lieber Gott, ich danke Dir !

En Stuebchen traut, so huebsch und nett,  
 Inmitten ein schneeweisses Bett ;—  
 Am Abend wies man mir es zu :  
 Ich fand darin gar suesse Ruh'.

Und als ich in die Kissen sank,  
 Da rief ich aus : Habt Dank, habt Dank !  
 Ich liege wie im Mutterarm,  
 Ein Kindlein, ohne Sorg' und Harm !

Gefunden ist die Mutter mein—  
 Die Eine Kirch' nur kann es sein—  
 Ihr will von heut' an ich mich weih'n !"—  
 Und trostvoll ruhig schlief ich ein.

After several conversations with the dear Father Niermann, the long yearned for day of my reception into the Holy Catholic Church was at last set. On Sunday, October 2, 1892, the Feast of the Holy Angels, which in that year concurred with the Feast

of the Holy Rosary, I finally attained under the protection of my guardian angel and certainly also through the intercession of the Blessed Virgin Mary to the fulfilment of my most ardent wish. It was impossible for me to wait still longer for my wife—I now had to *act*, as I knew it to be right before God, *setting aside all other considerations*. And I performed the most important step in my life: During high mass, in the presence of my eldest daughter, Rev. Father Niermann, another priest, and a large congregation, I joyfully made my Profession of Faith before Rev. Father Niermann on the day named. This was *the greatest day of my life*. For now my interior dawning had been developed by the grace of God: *I became a Catholic!* But not, perhaps, in a flighty enthusiasm and indistinct emotions, but *in a clear, firm conviction*, in consequence of the direction and graces of God, wonderfully bestowed upon me in my life. This moment at St. Joseph's Church in Davenport was the fruit of the development of many years and of severe struggles. But now the end was obtained! Now I was to become a member of the *True Church of Christ*, that Church, which has conquered all her enemies during more than eighteen hundred years of battle; that Church, for which millions of martyrs joyfully spilled their blood; that Church, which, with an innumerable troop of Saints in advance, passing on through the centuries, in a triumphal march as it were, following her sacramentally present King, with palms of victory in their hands and wreaths of lilies upon their heads, and with Hosanna and Alleluja upon their lips, gloriously enter the heavenly Jerusalem! O, that I also with my dear ones may one day be found among those, for whom is asked Apoc. 7, 13, 14: "These that are clothed in white robes, who are they? and

whence came they?—These are they who are come out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and have made them white in the blood of the Lamb.”—Indeed, out of deep waters, out of great tribulation also I had come, in order to wash my robes in the blood of the Lamb of God—in the Sacrament of Penance—and to find salvation for my soul in the firm castle of the Holy Church.—But a shadow still cast its darkness over my rejoicing heart; it was the question: what will my wife now say and do? Will she, following my example, also become a Catholic, or not?—When she arrived at Davenport with the children, a few days after my reception into the Catholic Church, it did not seem so at all in the beginning. She was beside herself, when she heard that I would *never* retract this step, and next of all a very sad time indeed followed for our house; for we now lived—in a *mixed marriage*! What that means, I have experienced sufficiently during this time; and here I can therefore not warn enough against this *hell on earth*. If man and wife are not one in the dearest and most sacred, in Religion, the foundation of all true happiness is lacking—and true, perfect education of children can be thought of less than ever. Whatever was to me the most sacred, was to her the most contemptible, whatever was to me the dearest, was to her the most indifferent. “No, rather an infidel,” my wife would say. But the children probably had to suffer the most on this account. The eldest of them did not know, what it meant that Papa and Mamma now quarreled so much with each other. And Sunday, destined for the day of the choicest blessings, became a day of quarreling—it was hardly to be borne much longer. May God forgive us both whatever we two have sinned against each other during that time!—

Finally, however, as after a heavy, sultry day, a beautiful red appears in the western skies,—thus by the grace of God, after days of unpleasant quarreling, a soft light at last rose in our house—according to the word of the Psalmist: “Light is risen to the just, and joy to the right of heart!” Yea, it was indeed a great joy for me, when my dear wife told me one evening: “For the sake of the children—because I see that one also can (!?) be saved in the Catholic Church—*I will become a Catholic!*” I was touched by this confession—and we celebrated a feast of joy. Rev. Father Niermann rejoiced also, when I imparted the news to him, and requested him to appoint a time for the instruction of my wife. This was done; and my wife loved to go, and the oftener she went, the more contented she came home, the clearer was the light that rose in her,—until after a few weeks she could also by the grace of God be received into the Holy Roman, Catholic Church, during high mass. On February 17,—I had waited so long on account of my wife—I finally went to Confession, and on the 19th—the day of the Golden Episcopal Jubilee of our Holy Father, Leo XIII.—we both received our first holy Communion at St. Joseph’s Church. That was joy, that was great joy!

For lately we had had very little joy, yea, my wife had also suffered immensely and was deprived of much ease on account of *my* conviction, which had to be so much harder for her, since at that time she still believed in the Lutheran “Church.” Yes, also in regard to temporalities we had to undergo many sufferings and privations. It is true, I earned a little as teacher of German at a College; also for a time as agent for good books; yes, once even as laborer in a factory,—but had not some good Catholics,

Revs. Niermann and Flannery at the head, assisted us besides, we would have had still harder times with our many children. But God cared for us at the proper time. After we, my wife and I, had once more received the Most Blessed Sacrament,—on just the same day—we received the news from Nebraska that I was wanted as teacher at Constance. This news certainly came at the right time and was entirely in harmony with my wishes. Since I could not become a priest on account of my family, I nevertheless was happy now to be able to serve the Lord in his lambs, the children. But since we were lacking the necessary traveling-money, we had to apply supplicatingly to well-disposed Catholics, etc.; and three weeks later we were enabled to leave.—May God reward all my benefactors at Davenport, especially also good Father Niermann, with temporal and spiritual blessings, and bestow upon us all one day, after this life's vicissitudinous pilgrimage, a happy meeting in the heavenly mansions!—



## CHAPTER XVI.

AS TEACHER TO CONSTANCE, NEBRASKA; WONDERFUL CURE OF MY DAUGHTER CLARA; TEACHER OF THE SCHOOL AT ST. CHARLES, NEB.

AFTER we had obtained the necessary amount of traveling-money with great difficulty, we left for Constance, Nebraska, passing on our way thither through Omaha. But how entirely different were our circumstances now from thirteen years ago, when we came to Omaha for the first time! Then we had sufficient traveling-money and—few children, now we had many children and—hardly enough traveling-money to arrive at my destination. For when we had to go from one depot to the other at Omaha, I hardly had enough money to pay for the carriage. Nevertheless we safely arrived at Hartington. Here I was pleased to make the acquaintance of the kind Father Loecker, who took care of us in Christian charity. But the drive out to Constance late in the evening—a distance of fourteen miles—I will never forget. It was bitterly cold; and nevertheless we neared our destination but slowly. The farmer, who drove us, was accustomed to the cold, and probably did not know how much we longed for a warm room. Now—at last we were there! How glad were the children, who were shivering with cold, and some of them crying, to get to the warm stove! But, upon entering the teacher's house (it just happened to be March 25, the Feast of the Annunciation of the Blessed Virgin)—who can describe our disappointment to

find the rooms cold and unheated. At all events, this was an oversight; and for this reason we were temporarily accommodated by some of the neighbors, and other arrangements were quickly made. That, then, was my arrival and reception at Constance! How different it was from those, arranged for us in former years! But I was glad and happy; for now I had a steady position and with my dear ones could entirely live up to my conviction as a *Catholic*, unnoticed by the world, almost in monastic solitude. But now we had to endure very many and grave sicknesses in our family. We lived there—and were to learn more and more to live—“as unknown, and yet known; as dying, and behold we live; as chastised, and not killed; as sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; as needy, yet enriching many; as having nothing, and possessing all things.” (II. Cor. 6, 8-10). For two and a half years I was teacher at Constance, which I certainly will never forget. For here God has bestowed many of His graces upon me, and I with my family could here in all tranquillity get well accustomed to our new spiritual home, the Catholic Church. But God knew well enough, what hard times were still to be our share, therefore He prepared us and strengthened our faith.

My eldest, dearly beloved daughter Clara took sick and had been given up by the physicians. There God evidently wrought a miracle. And this touched so mightily the strings of my soul, that I sung it out in a poem, and as a remembrance, had it published. Here it is:

## CURED BY THE SACRIFICE OF A HOLY MASS.

(March 13, 1895).

On January 17, of this year (1895) C. E., fifteen years of age, took sick. On Christmas and on New Year's Day she had sung in church, and this had always been her greatest delight and pleasure. In the beginning her sickness did not seem to be serious, since she only complained of headache, dizziness and general debility. On the ninth day, however, she began to talk deliriously with her eyes wide open. This condition lasted for a week; then she fell into an unconscious and lethargic condition, and commenced to sing one Mass after the other. Hymns and Litanies, in fact everything that she had ever heard or sung in her life, she sang without making a mistake—for days and weeks. Although two physicians had been consulted, they could not be of any assistance to her.

In the beginning she would now and then open her eyes for a few moments during the day; but, after she had closed them again, no power on earth would have been able to open them, and her melodies began anew. In this condition she lingered for three weeks. Then she became more quiet, she no longer opened her eyes—she heard and saw nothing. She was hovering between life and death. The priest was sent for, in order to administer Extreme Unction.

After this had been done, she said on the next day, Reminiscere Sunday, that *some one* had just told her to tell our priest what he should do; if he would do it, she would recover, but if he would not, she would go to heaven. To no one else were she allowed to say before hand what she should tell the priest. But what she had said were as true as she lay

in bed. With the exception of these few words she barely spoke a word from the ninth to the twelfth day of March, but lay perfectly quiet, her hands folded, or her arms crossed upon her breast—like a corpse. On Monday, March 11, she repeated before a large number of witnesses: "If Father Renner will not come tomorrow, angels will come and get me." Thus she lay quietly till Tuesday night, March 12, when Father Renner came. Now she told him: "You must say mass for me tomorrow in honor of St. Clara and St. Cecilia; and after mass you come here and see that I am well!" After the priest had gone, she said: "Father Renner does not believe that I shall recover, but he shall see that when he returns from saying mass, I will be cured."

And thus it happened! When her father went to church to attend mass for his child, he gave orders to mark the hour wherein she would grow better. So confidently did he believe that it would come to pass. And thus it came to pass: Immediately after the Communion of the priest she opened her eyes. The father at church knew by faith that she had been cured, and at the organ he sang a joyous hymn—in honor of St. Cecilia; and when he wanted to pray at the end of mass, he could but praise and thank the Lord. When the child which for two weeks had not opened her eyes, suddenly opened them,—the mother was surprised to the utmost, as if a corpse had again come to life.

The girl had of a sudden come to full consciousness, after she had not been capable of her senses for six weeks. She at once looked to see what time it was, and said that she must have slept rather long that morning, and were hungry in consequence thereof. Undoubtedly the latter must have been the

case, since she had not taken the least nourishment for a week, and had not even tasted a drop of water. She thought she had been sick for two weeks; but were now well. Consequently she knew nothing of the six weeks, during which she had lain there unconsciously, much less, what she had sung and spoken during that time. But it was true: When the priest and the father returned from mass, they found the girl hale and hearty, only naturally a little weak.

Does not this event prove the efficacy of the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, in which the divine Saviour is still ever truly present, as one time, when He still walked visibly upon the earth and healed so many sick!? Yea, verily: "If thou believe, thou shalt see the glory of God!"

GESUND GEWORDEN DURCH EINE HEILIGE MESSE.

(*Am 13. Maerz 1895*).

"Die Krankheit ist nicht zum Tode, sondern zur Ehre Gottes, damit der Sohn Gottes durch sie verherrlicht werde." St. Joh. XI, 4.

Wie langsam schleichen hin die Stunden  
Am Krankenbette bang' und schwer—  
Das teure Kind will nicht gesunden;  
Es ist schon bald zwei Monat her,  
Als sie auf's Krankenbett sank nieder,  
Zu singen hier Gott ihre Lieder.

Zu Weihnacht noch und Neujahr klangen  
Die Lieder ihr aus froher Brust,  
Als sie im frommen Heilsverlangen  
Sie sang zu aller Hoerer Lust  
Im Gotteshaus, zu Jesu Fuessen,  
Zu Seines Herzens Ehr, dem suessen.

Doch ach! die Krankheit will nicht weichen,  
 Obwohl der Aerzte waren zwei;  
 Sie koennen's Beide nicht erreichen,  
 Zu machen sie von Krankheit frei:  
 Der Aerzte Kunst, sie wird zu Schanden,  
 Kann nicht befreien von ihren Banden.

Der Vater laesst zum Priester senden,  
 Zu bringen Himmelsarzenei,  
 Die letzte Oelung ihr zu spenden,  
 Dass sie zum Tod bereitet sei.—  
 Er kommt und salbt sie mit dem Oele,  
 Befehlend Gott dann ihre Seele.

Der Kerzen Schein, er ist verglommen—  
 Der Truebsal Schatten lagert schwer  
 Auf Allen, die zum Bette kommen:  
 "Gewiss, sehr lang lebt die nicht mehr!"—  
 So sprechen sie mit *einem* Munde,  
 Verzweifelnd, dass sie je gesunde.

Die Mutter selbst hoert auf zu hoffen,  
 Es ist ihr gar so schwer um's Herz;  
 Des Leidens Schwert hat sie getroffen,  
 Es schneidet tief der stille Schmerz:  
 "Ein *Wunder* nur kann sie noch retten,  
 Zu stehen auf von ihren Betten!"

Der Vater nur faehrt fort zu hoffen,  
 Dass sie gewiss nicht sterben wird;—  
 Ihn hat das Wort der Schrift getroffen,  
 Das einmal sprach der gute Hirt:  
 "Die Krankheit ist zum Tod mit nichten—  
 Zu Gottes Ehr' wird sie sich richten."

So sitzt er da am Krankenbette—  
 Gebeugt, doch Trost im Herzen tief.—  
 Wie gern er sie doch wieder haette,  
 Die gleich wie tot da vor ihm schlief:—  
 Noch *einmal* nur moecht' ich hernieder  
 "In *diese* Augen schauen wieder!"—

Doch ihre Augen sind geschlossen;—  
 Seit sie die einmal aufschlug noch,  
 Schon vierzehn Tage sind verflossen!—  
 "O Gott, so hilf *Du* endlich doch!"—  
 So fleht es in des Vaters Herzen  
 Gar bang und heiss in tiefen Schmerzen.

Da winkt sie ihm mit ihren Haenden  
 Zu sich an's Krankenbette hin:  
 Es scheint, Gott will die Krankheit wenden,  
 Zu machen sie uns zum Gewinn.—  
 "Soeben that mir *Jemand* sagen:  
 Ich solle unsern Priester fragen!"—

"O sprich, wann kommt er zu uns wieder?"  
 Lieb Kind, am Dienstag, er versprach,  
 Zu kommen schnell zu uns hernieder.—  
 "Nun denn, die laengste Zeit ich lag!—  
 Ich soll und muss es ihm dann sagen,  
 Was *Jemand* mir hat aufgetragen!"

"Doch *was* ich ihm dann sagen werde,  
*Zuvor* ich darfs nicht sagen aus—  
 Sonst soll ich gehn von dieser Erde  
 Mit Engeln in des Himmels Haus!"—  
 Dann fuhr sie fort, mir Trost zu spenden,  
 Nach *oben* deutend mit den Haenden:

“Doch glaub ich wohl, dass ers wird tuen,  
 Um was ich hab’ zu bitten ihn!—  
 Und dann—wie sanfte wird sich’s ruhen  
 Fuer mich, wenn alle Schmerzen ziehn  
 Von meinem mueden Haupt hernieder:  
 —Ich sing dann auch in Kirche wieder!”—

“So wahr ist das, was ich Dir sage,  
 Als ich in diesem Bette bin!”  
*Beschwor’s*—und dann am andern Tage  
 Auf’s neue warf sie wieder hin:  
 “Wenn Vater Renner nicht kann kommen,  
 Von Engeln werd’ ich aufgenommen!”—

Ja, *dieser* Tag!—Es war ein Bangen,  
 Ein Hoffen und ein Fuerchten schier!  
 Ach, wie ein aengstliches Verlangen,  
 Ein Beten, Flehn: “Waer’ er doch hier!”  
 Es war ein Tag der stillen Traenen,  
 Es war ein Tag voll heissem Sehnen!

“Wird-Vater-Renner-noch-nicht-kommen?”  
 So hoert ichs oeffter her vom Bett!—  
 Es dient ja alles uns zum Frommen—  
 Der Christ hat hier nicht Heimatsstaett.  
 So kam der Trost aus Gottes Bronnen:  
 “Auf Truebsal folgen Himmelswonnen!”

Indes sah ich so still sie schlafen,—  
 Wie aufgebahrt im Sarkophag,  
 Als waere sie schon bei den Schafen,  
 Die weiden da, wo ewig Tag;—  
 Gekreuzt die schoenen Arme lagen,  
 Auf Engel wartend, sie zu tragen!—

Da sah ich unsern Priester eilen—  
 Er kam und setzte sich zu ihr.—  
 Nun sagte sie ihm ohn' Verweilen,  
 Was sie nicht durfte sagen mir:  
 "Du sollst fuer mich die Messe lesen;  
 Und ich werd' dann *sofort* genesen!"

"Doch bitt ich sehr: mit Andacht lesen—  
 Fuer Clara und Caecilia;—  
 Dann ist es nicht umsonst gewesen—  
 Und nach der Messe kommst Du da  
 Und sollst mit Deinen Augen sehen,  
 Wie grosses Wunder ist geschehen!"

Der gute Priester legt sich schlafen.—  
 Am Morgen dann er Messe haelt;  
 Er wandelt unter seinen Schafen  
 Und opfert Gott fuer alle Welt;  
 Besonders aber, wie gebeten,  
 Fuer's arme Lamm in seinen Noeten.

Und als wir aus der Kirche eilen,  
 Man fragt: "Wie geht es Deinem Kind?"  
 Der Vater sagt es ohn' Verweilen:  
 "Zu Hause ich es besser find!"  
 Und als sie Beid' zur Tuer eintreten;  
 ES IST GESCHEH'N WIE SIE GEBETEN!

Ganz freudestrahlend kommt entgegen  
 Die Mutter uns mit frohem Blick!—  
 Das ist der heil' gen Messe Segen,  
 Das ist ein wunderbar Geschick:  
 Noch eben krank ist sie gewesen,  
 Bevor die Messe war gelesen!"

Doch nun, wie Gott ihr liess es sagen:  
 "Ihr ist gescheh'n, wie sie geglaubt!"  
 Gestillt sind alle Trauerklagen,  
 Und Freude ist ob unserm Haupt!  
 Nein, nicht zum Tode war der Kranken  
 So grosses Elend—nur *zum Danken!*

Nach den bangen Trauerstunden,  
 Nach der Naechte Dunkelheit,  
 Hab' ich suessen Trost gefunden,  
 Sah des Heilands Herrlichkeit;—  
 Sah der wahren Kirche Walten  
 Unter Brod—und Weins-Gestalten!—

Nun, Herr Jesu, Dir wir wollen  
 Opfern Leib und Seele ganz,  
 Unser Denken, Thun und Sollen!—  
 Reich uns einst des Lebens Kranz!—  
 Nach der Erde Not und Weinen  
 Lass das ew'ge Licht uns scheinen!—

Yes, the Lord knew well enough that we stood in need of having our faith strengthened. For when I lost my position at Constance on account of poor hearing, it is true, I succeeded in obtaining another position at the parochial school at St. Charles for my eldest daughter, since I myself was disabled on account of the just mentioned afflictions. But hardly five months had elapsed when this school—probably on account of differences in the congregation—was suddenly closed by the pastor (February 6, 1896), and since then we have often been in want of the most necessary things. But our heavenly Father has always sent us assistance in due time; and we trust that He, who has thus far helped us so wonderfully,

will also help us in the future; He, who so wonderfully has led us into His Holy Catholic Church, will also give us our daily bread the remainder of our earthly pilgrimage,—until we, having out of the mansion of the Church Militant happily attained to the Church Triumphant, shall sit with our Saviour and King and with all Saints at the heavenly supper, forever blissfully experiencing: *“And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes”* and: *“Blessed are they that are called to the marriage supper of the Lamb!”*



## CONCLUSION.

Yes, *wonderful are God's ways*—but he brings about everything gloriously! Darkness often surrounds the pilgrim, but then it again becomes light. For “through darkness to light!” is the pass-word of the Christian. God has also led me thus—out of the darkness of error to the bright light of the truth, the Catholic Church. Now then I have at last—thank God, not alone, but with wife and children (only my eldest son still wanders astray from the true fold) come to the true home and dwelling, to the Church, which is a pillar and ground of the truth (I. Tim. 3, 15),—“*come to mount Sion, to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to the company of many thousands of angels, to the church of the first-born, who are written in the heavens, to God the judge of all, to the spirits of the just made perfect, and to Jesus the mediator of the new testament!*” (Hebr. 12, 22-24).

And if after all, dear reader, you should still ask me: *Why* did you become a Catholic? I could simply answer: Because God Himself has led me to the Catholic Church, as I have narrated to you. Undoubtedly the intercession of the Blessed Virgin has also been of great assistance to me: On a feast of the Blessed Virgin (Candlemas-day), February 2, 1892, I left Australia; on a feast of the Blessed Virgin, October 2, of the same year, the first Sunday of the named month, on the Feast of the Holy Rosary, I was received into the Catholic Church; and on a feast

of the Blessed Virgin, (Annunciation of the Blessed Virgin) March 25, 1893, I finally obtained a steady position again. Yes, Mary was to me *maris stella*, the Star of my life, by her powerful intercession illuminating my path upon the dangerous sea of this life and, like a mother, consoling me with the soft light of her love and guiding me to the true Church—thus I became *Catholic*! But, once more briefly recapitulating all that I have said, I will answer you: I became Catholic not for worldly reasons;—perhaps in order to please others—on the contrary we have drawn the displeasure of all relations and friends upon us;—neither in order to get rich in earthly goods;—we knew beforehand that poverty awaited us;— but: OUT OF THE PROFOUNDEST CONVICTION OF THE HEART: There is but One Church, and this can be no other than the Catholic; for *she alone* bears the signs of the true Church as a Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church. In her alone therefore, following her teachings, man attains to *certain* salvation and life everlasting! *Whoever has recognized this*, must, if he does not want to be a hypocrite, become a Catholic; and for him there is no other salvation—whatever it may cost. For “*the kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent bear it away.*” Then it is our duty to lay aside all earthly considerations and ties of any kind, in order to follow the calling of the Lord: “*Save thy soul!*” Then one can not act according to the judgment and friendship of others, but must on the contrary be ready to experience the word of our Saviour: “*You shall be hated by all men for my name’s sake.*” For in no other community of the world is this word verified so completely as in the community of the Catholic Church. All Christian sects and other religious parties find more “favor” in the eyes of the

infidels and misbelievers than the Catholic Church. She is reproached with intolerance; but she is never tolerated—yea, they can rather bear everything else, than anything Catholic. In their hatred against her the parties meet and unite, like Herod and Pilate, united by their hatred against Christ, became friends.—Yes when the closest ties, even those between father and son, between parents and children, between brother and sister are broken on account of the profession of the true Church, so that the son begins to hate his father, it is only the fulfillment of the Saviour's prediction: (St. Matth. 10, 35, 36) "For I came to set a man at variance against his father—and a man's *enemies* shall be *they of his own household*." This I must now experience to my great sorrow *from my own son*, the eldest, who is entirely under the influence of the *Protestant* relations in Germany. For this reason, although he certainly *could* have found the Truth, the blame does not fall upon him alone; and, I hope, God's grace will know how to find also *this* lost sheep and finally to lead it to the true Church. But, on the other hand, I have the joy that two of my sons, Constantine and Ambrose, are preparing for the holy priesthood, in order to serve the Lord at the altar of His Church one day, as I hope.

Oh, that I could also say one day: "*Lord of them whom thou hast given me, I have not lost any one!*" That—and with this I turn above all to you, *my own dear children*—is my prayer for you! You see from the preceding narration, how hard it was for your father, what *sacrifices* your parents have made, in order to be enabled to be Catholic. Don't ever forget this! *Cling the more firmly to your spiritual mother, the Holy Catholic Church, and hear her and follow*

her! Do not merely be Catholics *in name*, but be Catholics *in deed and truth*—in Faith, Hope and Charity—unto your last moment: Thus we will one day have the joy, after the hand that has written this has long since decayed in the grave, to meet again, after this life's sorrows and tribulations, in heavens' everlasting blissful joy—before the Throne of God—in eternal glory!

And also *to all other Catholics*, who may read this book, I wish to address a few hearty words: O, you, who had the happiness to be Catholics from birth on, do not know at all, how many struggles Protestants, and especially Protestant ministers, must encounter, and what great sacrifices they must make, when, convinced of the Truth, by the grace of God they become Catholic! And yet, how many bad and *lukewarm* Catholics are there, who merely *externally* help in increasing the membership of their Church, without really belonging to her inwardly,—and therefore in the end perish forever!—Yes, how many *apostate* Catholics are there in this country, who have suffered shipwreck in regard to their Faith, and drift upon the waters of infidelity and godlessness—without rest and without peace—towards the surgy shores of eternal damnation! O consider, as long as it is time, what is conducive to your peace, think of the fortune in the parental home the Church and—*return*, turn back, to your home! For only "*he that shall persevere unto the end, he shall be saved!*"

But what should I say to our *Protestant brethren*? "*God will have all men to be saved, and to come to the knowledge of the truth,*" and to the SINCERE He will give success. That in Protestantism there are, at the most, mere fragments of Truth, becomes only too evident from the fact, that all Protestant sects *contra-*

*dict* one another in doctrine, and, therefore, exterminate each other by continual dissensions. The *Truth* however *does not contradict herself*, is but *one* and *unites* mankind,—whilst errors and lies contradict each other and divide mankind. For the Truth is of God, the lie of the devil; the Truth makes happy in virtues; the lie unhappy in sins; the Truth leads to heaven, the lie to hell. Therefore it is indeed *not indifferent*, to which “Church” one belongs, as Indifferentism of our day’s dreams. By this I do not mean to say that all those, who do not belong to the Catholic Church externally, will be damned; but this shall nevertheless be said that all non-Catholics *can never arrive* in the harbor of eternal salvation *in their private ships*, i. e. with their private doctrine, but *only in connection with the one safe ship the Catholic Church*. Whoever is saved among the Protestants is saved not by his Protestantism, but only by the rays of Truth, which from the Catholic Church even fall upon the Protestants erring in Truth. At all events however, Protestantism which in its essence *questions* all Truth in the end, is *no safe religion*; and whoever understands this, SHOULD HASTEN AND SAVE HIS SOUL and those of his children IN THE CATHOLIC CHURCH!

*Sincere* souls will, it is true, find a way to the true home of the Catholic Church, for ways there are many. But in order to aid these sincere ones, who are seeking the whole Truth, I will here add a few *questions* for serious consideration and reflection, which at one time, when still in darkness of doubt, I proposed to myself, but which have brought light into my darkness and therefore may also be of benefit to others, who are in a similar condition:

1. *Has Christ established ONE or more (visible) Churches?*

2. *Which is the true Church? Perhaps the Lutheran? Or the Methodist, etc.?*

3. *What is to be thought of the CATHOLIC Church? Does she look like "the Babylonian harlot?" Can the Papacy with its blessings for the nations really be looked upon as "founded by the devil" (as Luther claimed)? If the Catholic Church is not the true Church, WHICH IS IT?*

4. *Upon what does the Lutheran (Presbyterian, etc). "Church" found its doctrine? Which is the authority that has to decide upon doctrinal questions? Can it be the Bible, which all sects refer to? If there is no such authority,—what follows?*

Answer: That Christ has left His Church "orphans," and has *not* fulfilled *His promises*, "to be with her all days, even to the consummation of the world;" yes, that there is nothing but doubt and uncertainty, confusion and dissension, therefore no *One Holy, Catholic (Universal) Church*.

All these questions can also be *concentrated in the One question: IS THE CATHOLIC CHURCH THE TRUE CHURCH OF CHRIST, OR NOT?*

Upon this question hinges the entire History of the World, and no one can pass it indifferently. There are legions of political, social and other questions; but *this* question with its powerful consequences—again and again looms up in the foreground of History as *THE* question, the soul of all other questions, and requires an answer. No one can remain indifferent to this question. "Either"—"Or!"—*Either*: the Catholic Church is not the One true Church—then it must be another;—but which?—Then there is no Church at all on earth, to which the Truth has been entrusted infallibly,—everything that has been revealed regarding our eternal salvation is uncertain, and

Christ is not risen,—all religion is humbug and deception of priests—all Christians are deceived, and there is in reality no Truth, no God, no Eternity; and infidelity is right with its: Eat, drink and be merry, for tomorrow ye die!—*Or*, on the contrary: the Catholic Church is the One Church founded by Christ, which, guided by the Holy Ghost, infallibly possesses the Truth and teaches the nations to observe all things, which Christ has commanded her—and every one, who has the salvation of his soul at heart, must of necessity hear her, in order to find everything within her, which can enlighten his understanding, strengthen his will-power for the good, and fill his heart with peace and true happiness—for time and eternity!—Reason already tells us this. But bear in mind, my dear reader, not by study *alone* one is converted to the Catholic Church; but *prayer*, and again prayer, and fervent, incessant prayer is necessary,—until the grace of God gives to the will the accomplishment—that in view of former prejudices one can confess with courage and joyous conviction *before* the whole world: “I BELIEVE ONE, HOLY, CATHOLIC, APOSTOLIC CHURCH!”

But you, dear Catholic Christian, who have followed me with interest thus far in this little volume, remember occasionally the poor sinner, who has written this for your benefit and for that of others, as also for the greater honor and glory of God, and *pray for him* that he may, together with you one day—after the misery and grief of this poor life—rejoice among the jubilant throngs of the just and saints in heaven,—say for him a devout and fervent

Ave Maria.



## SOME COMMENTS OF THE GERMAN CATHOLIC PRESS.

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Mr. Eberhard's book "God's Ways are Wonderful" is one of the most remarkable of its kind. It is a reprint of the articles which recently appeared in the excellent weekly "The Wanderer." The author has done well to publish these articles in book form. The book shows very plainly the unsettled state, wretchedness of Protestantism. Pages 127-130, which treat of church-organization, are especially instructive. As the book presents to the reader the Protestant battle for church existence, furthermore, the longing of a sincere heart for unity in faith and truth, and finally the infinite value of Catholic unity, firmness and vitality, it certainly must be of high value to all children of the Catholic Church. Therefore, it is our wish that it might come into the hands of many Catholics to strengthen their faith.—We will not leave unmentioned that those who buy the book help to support the author and his large family.

"Paradiesesfruechte,"

St. Meinrad, Ind.

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Catholics and such of other persuasion as sincerely seek the truth, will derive great benefit from the reading of the interesting life of a convert. Very convincingly the author in his book "God's Ways are Wonderful" pictures the dissensions, as well as the worm-eaten state of modern Protestantism. Reading it we are led to see the necessity of a church-center, that is, of a chief-bishop, who, endowed by Christ with supreme power, is called to manage the affairs of the sacred institution. On the other hand Mr. Eberhard's life and the great sacrifices he made to obtain the true faith clearly show the work of the grace of God. We recommend the book to all our readers.

"Der Sendbote."

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We call the public attention to "God's Ways are Wonderful," written by Mr. Martin J. Th. Eberhard, former Lutheran Minister. It can be highly recommended to all Catholics, for it will certainly strengthen their faith; also to all believers among the Protestants who are interested in religious controversies. Perhaps this will help them to find the truth.—We especially request our German Confratres to order this book in large quantities for distribution.

"Chicago Sonntagsblatt."

The author of this very interesting and commendable book is a former Lutheran pastor, who, after many struggles, at last found true happiness and satisfaction in the Catholic Church. The events that led to his conversion are here related with great earnestness and sincerity. . . . The dissensions in the Lutheran "Church," as well as the difference in Protestant and Catholic teachings, are set forth in the most interesting and thorough way. . . . We recommend this book especially to those Christians who are subject to religious doubts; also, to all outside of the Catholic Church who seek the truth and consequently instruction about the teachings and customs of the Catholic Church.

"Der Wahrheitsfreund."

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The author of this book is the son of an orthodox pastor in Lutheran Mecklenburg. As a Lutheran theologian he went to America and Australia, and, after many struggles and temptations, he found true happiness and true peace in the Holy Catholic Church, founded by Jesus Christ. Mr. Eberhard relates how he and with him almost all the members of his numerous family became Catholics, also the difficulties, struggles, sacrifices, which he, on his way through three continents, had to undergo. The book is valuable not only to those that seek the truth, but also to those, who already possess the same, by teaching them to hold it in higher esteem and guard it more carefully, as well as true apostolic sympathy for the separated brethren without which a reunion is impossible.

"Katholische Volkszeitung."

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There are many books written by converts to the Catholic Faith, and their study, certainly, is very beneficial to Protestant, as well as Catholic readers. Yet, Mr. Eberhard's book, "God's Ways are Wonderful," is superior to most of those written in the German language, inasmuch as the events narrated, take place not only in Germany, but in other countries as well, mostly in our own. It, therefore, offers to the reader much valuable information regarding the deplorable state of Lutheranism ("The Church of the Reformation") in countries where it exists, without the support of the government.

"The Wanderer."

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We have read the book with the greatest of interest, and certain passages, even with emotion. It is very edifying, indeed, and written in the spirit of piety and christian humility.

"Ohio Waisenfreund."

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EBERHARD, M.H.

AUTHOR

God's ways are Wonderful

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